

THE
FOOL of QUALITY;
OR, THE
HISTORY
OF
Henry Earl of Moreland.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

By Mr. BROOKE.

LONDON:

Printed for W. JOHNSTON, in Ludgate-Street.
MDCCLXVIII,

THE
FOOL OF QUALITY;

OR THE
HISTORY

HENRY EARL OF NORFOLK



STORY OF THE CLINTON

THE WORLD, my lovely con-
fide, the world is to you as his
temper or complexion. The
mind constitutes its own property and
adversely; winter presents no cloud to a
cheerful spirit, neither can summer find
injustice for the spirit that is in a state of
dejection. In my youth, every object
presented me with happiness; but alas!
the time came when the universe appear-
ed as a vault wherein joy was extinguished,
and

THE
FOOL of QUALITY;
OR, THE
H I S T O R Y
OF
HENRY Earl of MORELAND.

C H A P. XIII.

STORY of the Hon. Mr. CLINTON.

THE WORLD, my lovely cousin, the world is to man as his temper or complexion. The mind constitutes its own prosperity and adversity; winter presents no cloud to a chearful spirit, neither can summer find sunshine for the spirit that is in a state of dejection. In my youth, every object presented me with happiness; but alas! the time came when the universe appeared as a vault wherein joy was entombed,

4 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

and the sun himself but as a lamp that served to shew the gloom and the horrors around me.

As my father and mother died before I was taken from nurse, I knew none of those parental tenderneſſes and endearments that ſerve to humanize the ſoul and give it the firſt impreſſions of ſocial attachment; neither were thoſe ſweetneſſes, in any degree, ſupplied to me by the behaviour of an imperious brother, or of a magiſterial guardian. As I was naturally, however, of a benevolent caſt, I ſought for thoſe affections and amities among ſtrangers which I had not found in the boſoms or faces of relations.

I paſs over the immaterial parts of my life at ſchool and college, and haſten to the more important period of my apprenticeship.

Your father bound me to Mr. Golding, a very wealthy and eminent merchant, who lived over-againſt the Exchange. He had been ſome years a widower, and his only child, a daughter, was then at the boarding-school.

Mr. Golding, with a plain underſtanding, was a man of ſtrict honeſty and a ſuſceptible heart. At firſt ſight he conceived a partial affection for me, whereof he gave me very frequent and very tender

der proofs; and, as he stood to me in the place of a patron, and a father, I felt for him all the fondness and attachment of a child.

In the fourth year of my apprenticeship he called me to his closet, and taking me kindly by the hand, Harry, says he, I love you; your interest lies near my heart, for, though you are not the begotten of my body, you are the child of my affections. — Be quiet, Harry! — Let me speak! — I have to talk to you of matters of consequence. — I went yesterday to your uncle Goodall to know how accounts stood between ye — though he is but a cold kinsman, he is a very faithful guardian. — He has just married a very lovely young woman, and I would have you go and pay your compliments to them on the occasion. — Your uncle has laid out your little penny to good advantage, and your 12,000*l.* is now nearly doubled. — And now, Harry, as your father did not behave like a father toward you, in the dividend which he made between you and your brother, I propose, in some measure, to supply his place, and I make you a present of this note of 12,000*l.* which added to your little patrimony may enable you. — O, Sir! I cried. — Be quiet, child, I say again, till you

6 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

find whether or no you shall have reason to thank me----I am growing old, my Harry, and, by a long course of industry, have earned a kind of title to some little rest; I would therefore gladly make a composition between your application and my repose. I shall not be so often in the counting-house as usual. I propose to take you into immediate partnership. But, as I also propose that you shall be at three-fourths of the trouble, it is but just that I should offer you a proportionable advantage.---Now as my capital, Harry, is more than five times as much as yours of 36,000 *l*. I offer to your acceptance a full moiety of all the profits in recompence of your extraordinary attention and application.---Hear me out!---- I do not think that I shall lose by this bargain. The affairs of Potiphar prospered under the hands of young Joseph; and I believe that you, also, are a favourite of your God.

I could not speak, The good man perceived my oppression, and catching me in his arms, and pressing me to his bosom, he shed a silent tear of satisfaction upon me, and withdrew without saying another word.

For several days following Mr. Gold-
ing was employed in advising his correspondents.

pondents that I was now become his partner and equal in trade, and I was wearied with congratulations on my being one of the principal merchants in London before I had attained my twentieth year.

The obligations and advantages which this good man thus delighted to heap upon me, incited me to double application and sagacity, and all the eyes of Argus were opened within me for superintending and guarding the interests of my patron.

I have often thought it somewhat romantic that I should win both my wives by a matter of adventure, so that their partiality in my favour ought perhaps to be ascribed to a sentiment of gratitude, rather than to any liking which they might take to my person.

On a day in summer I rode to Barnet to settle accounts with Mr. Fradgil, a correspondent of my master's, who was said to be indisposed at his country-seat. As I approached the town, I observed an elderly gentlewoman walking leisurely toward me, attended by an orderly train of young maidens. I observed at the same time, two men in glistering apparel who hastily followed, and, coming quickly up, put all the females to a stand, and caused them to gather in a group, as for mutual

8 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

defence. One of the men, however, no way daunted by the opposition of so numerous a company, rudely caught one of the elder misses in his arms, and, repeatedly kissing her, thrust his hand into her bosom. Mean while the young lady shrieked and cried aloud for help, when, riding suddenly up, I struck the ruffian to the ground, with the heavy end of my whip. His companion hereupon drew his sword and turned upon me, but, pushing my horse at him, I cast him also to the earth, then alighting, I broke their swords, and, leaving my gallants in a plight not suddenly to be dreaded, I led my horse by the bridle till I saw my fair wards all safe to their dwelling.

Some months after this incident, Mr. Golding called me aside. Harry, says he, my daughter is now drawing to woman's estate, and should learn something more substantial than needle-work, and dancing, and harpsichords, and frenchified phrases. I therefore propose to take her home, where, by the help of our cook and house-keeper, she may be taught how to make a Sunday's pudding, and to superintend a family.

I regularly go to see her, once in every month, accompanied by some male or female acquaintance, but never called you
A- to

to be of the party, as we could not so conveniently be both from home.

My child, though a plain girl, is very dutiful and good-natured. Her fortune, as you are sensible, will entitle her to the first lord of the land; yet I know not how it is, I would rather that my girl should be happy than great. I do not wish to have her a fine titled dame. I would rather, I say, see her married to some honest and tender hearted man, whose love might induce him to domesticate with her, and to live peaceably and pleasingly within his family-circle, than to see her mated with a prince of the blood.

Now, Harry, as this affair, of all affairs, fits nearest at my heart, it is greatly in your power to oblige me beyond expression. On my daughter's coming home, I conclude we shall be beset by a number of courtiers; such an Argo, when freighted with such a fleece, will unquestionably be held in chace by many a pirate. Wherefore, my son, I would have you keep a sharp and inquisitive eye about you, and to take good note of the manners and dispositions of such suitors as my daughter shall appear to regard. As also to inquire minutely into their circumstances and characters. Your vigi-

lance and penetration may save us from ruin. Should my child be made unhappy, your friend must be most miserable. But I depend, my dear Harry, that while I live you will prove a kind brother to her; and that you will prove a father to her in case of my mortality. Here the good man, no longer able to restrain his passion, put his handkerchief to his eyes, and quitted the chamber.

Within a few days Mr. Golding set out, accompanied by a number of his city friends, in order to conduct his daughter home. On their arrival I was deeply engaged in the counting-house, and it was near the time for supper before I could attend. As I entered, Mr. Golding presented me to his daughter, saying, this, my dear, is Mr. Clinton, my partner, my friend, my son, and your brother. Hereupon Miss Golding coloured, and drawing back as I approached to salute her, if I am not mistaken, Sir, says she, he is something more to us than all you have mentioned, it would ill become me to forget that he is the deliverer of your daughter.---Your deliverer, my dear Matty! how, where, when?---Why, pray, papa, did Mr. Clinton never tell you of his adventure at Barnet?---No indeed, my dear.---It is not every one who

who would be silent, papa, where so much was to be said to their own honour. I remember that your knights in romance, when too modest to boast of their own achievements, used to permit some friend or squire to deliver down to posterity the history of their adventures, and I take the liberty to be squire to Mr. Clinton on the like occasion.

Here Miss Golding began to give a narrative of the matter already recited, but in terms of high phrase and aggravated encomium. While all abashed and confused, I withdrew, saying, that I did not remember of any knights who staid to hear their own story.

In truth, I was much surprised to hear Miss Golding mention the adventure of Barnet, for I did not recollect that I had ever seen her, and had taken much more note of two or three other Misses than I had of her.

Being resummoned to supper, Mr. Golding met me as I entered, and, clasping me in his arms, O my Harry, he cried, how wonderfully gracious has God been to me in sending my best friend to the rescue of my only child; in sending, at so critical and very fearful a conjuncture, perhaps the only person who had either gallantry or humanity enough to preserve her,

12 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

her. Indeed, Sir, I replied, you owe me nothing; I did not even know that the Lady was your daughter, and I could not pride myself, in any degree, on an action which I thought incumbent on every man to perform.

During supper Miss Golding was very chearful and agreeable. Her face indeed could not be numbered among the beauties, but her person was grace and majesty, though in miniature, her conversation was pleasing, and when she sung or touched her instruments, for she was mistress of several, her mien and motions were music, each note seemed a sentiment, and we felt her fingers playing on the chordage of our heart.

For the first three months after Miss Golding's arrival, all was crouding and gaiety, assembly and festival at our house. She was as a magnet that drew and grouped all the peerage and gentry of England together. But, as business happened to croud upon us uncommonly at that season, I was not at liberty to partake of their amusements, and I resigned to Mr. Golding the commission which he had given me respecting the parties who declared themselves suitors.

As those suitors, in a daily and numerous succession, applied to Mr. Golding
for

for his consent, his general answer was, that his good liking was inseparable from that of his only child; that he would, if they pleased, consult her on the occasion, and faithfully report to them her approbation or dissent. In the like conclusive manner, when Mr. Golding repeatedly questioned his daughter, she would take his hand between her's, and, kissing it, say, O no, my dear papa, this is not the man.

One day, as I sat alone in the counting-room, Miss Golding entered and presented me with an order from her father for 250 l. And pray, Madam, said I, why this ceremony, this matter of form? Sure Miss Golding may, at any time, command twenty times this sum without any order save her own intimation.----Indeed! are you serious, Mr. Clinton? I am very proud, I assure you, to have so much credit with you.---But, Mr. Harry, how comes it to pass that we have so little of your company?----Your father's business, Madam, deprives me of the pleasure I should otherwise have in attending you.---Again, Sir! I am quite proud that it is your attention to my father, alone, which prevents your having any attention for his daughter.---so saying, she vanished.

Immediately I was struck with a glimpse of some uncommon meaning in the

14 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

the words and behaviour of Miss Golding, but, as I never had looked toward the way of her affections, I passed it lightly over as some matter of whim or caprice in the sex.

Among the brilliant concourse of suitors that frequented our house there was one Mr. Spelling, a young gentleman highly accomplished in his person and manners, and of a most amiable countenance and disposition. His father, like Miss Golding's, had been a merchant, and, like him too, had amassed a very large fortune. As he was modest, as I may say, to a degree of shamefacedness, he did not declare himself a lover, till nearly the whole multitude of competitors had been discarded. Then, with a blushing diffidence, he avowed his passion to Mr. Golding, and earnestly besought his consent and intercession in his favour. You have not only my consent, replied the good old man! you have also my best wishes, and shall have my best endeavours for your success: However, I must warn you at the same time, Mr. Spelling, that I will not do any violence to the inclinations of my child, although there are not two in the world whom I would prefer to you.

I was writing in my closet when Mr. Golding came in, with an anxious importance

ance in his countenance, and telling me what had passed between him and Mr. Spelling, asked if I did not approve the match. I do not know, Sir, said I, that man in England who is so deserving of your daughter as Mr. Spelling. Then, my dear Harry, I have a commission to give you; Matilda has a great respect for your judgment! I beseech you to make use of your influence with her, and to exert all your oratory in behalf of this young man.—But, Sir, will not Miss Matilda look on this as a matter of high presumption in one who has no manner of right to advise.—No matter, you may tell her that you did it by my desire and that we are both of a mind with regard to this business.—Well, Sir, said I, since you are bent upon it, I will obey you, but it is the first time that ever I obeyed you with reluctance.

Soon after Mr. Golding left me, his daughter entered, with a countenance visibly anxious and confused. My papa, Sir, said she, informs me that you have a business of consequence to impart to me.—I hope, Madam!—Pray be seated a moment. —Indeed, my dear Miss Golding, this office was not of my choosing, and I hope, I say, you will be so good as to pardon my presumption, in
consideration

consideration of my acting by your father's command. — You alarm me, Mr. Clinton, pray proceed. — Mr. Spelling, Madam, at length, has had the assurance to declare his passion for you. Your father highly approves of Mr. Spelling for a son-in-law; and indeed, Miss, might I dare to speak my judgment, I know not where you could chuse to better advantage. — If that is the case, Mr. Harry, I wish that I also could be of the same opinion — And are you not, Madam? what objection can you form, what exception can you have to my friend Spelling? — A very simple one, Sir, and no better than this, that he is not the man who can make me happy. — I am sorry for it, my dear Miss Golding, I am truly sorry for it; were I to pick from mankind, were I to chuse throughout the world, if any one can deserve you, it is, surely, this same Spelling. — And yet, Mr. Harry, I remember to have seen the man who, in every grace and merit, is infinitely preferable to your favourite Spelling. — Where, when, my dear Miss? — When I am brought to the torture, I may possibly be under the necessity of confessing. — Pardon, pardon, sweet Madam, I meant no offence; and yet I wish to Heaven I knew. — But that you never shall know,

Mr. Harry,

Mr. Harry. — Pray, then, Madam, if I may adventure on one question more, has the party so highly favoured any knowledge of his own happiness? — I hope not, Mr. Harry. But of what advantage could his knowledge prove to me, I beseech you? Can you suppose that such a person as I have described could deign to look with favour on such a one as I am? — I do not believe, Madam, that the man is in England who would not think himself highly honoured, highly blessed, with your hand. But then are you assured, Miss, that this man is worthy of it? — Ah, there lies my misfortune! he is too worthy, too noble, too accomplished, too lovely, too much every thing for my wishes & leave any thing to my hopes. And now, Mr. Harry, that I have entrusted you with my secret, I hope you will not betray my confidence, and reveal it to my papa. I rather trust and request that you will use some other colour for reconciling him to my refusal of Mr. Spelling. And to make you some amends for the mortification I have given you, by rejecting your advocacy in behalf of your friend, I here engage never to marry without your approbation, though I do not promise, Sir, that you shall dictate to my choice. There is one thing further,

Mr. Clinton,

118 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Mr. Clinton, in which you may oblige me, it is to prevail on my father to dismiss these assemblies and revels that distract our house; indeed, they never were to my taste, though by their novelty, at first they might have helped to amuse a little matter of melancholy that hung upon my mind, but now they are grown quite insufferable to me.----Here her eye began to fill, and, heaving a gentle sigh, she curtsied and withdrew.

Immediately my heart was softened and affected, I saw the child of my friend and patron, the one in whom his hopes and fortunes, and very life, were wrapt up; I saw that she was unhappy, that she was very unhappy, at a time that she had forbidden me to attempt her relief, though I would gladly have parted with half my fortune to have been enabled to give the object of her wishes to her arms.

In the mean while, my dearest Madam, it was the farthest of all things from entering into my imagination, that I was the very person who sat so near her heart. I daily saw the loveliest youths and titled chiefs of the land attendant on her words and smiles, and humbly suing for her favour. I saw also that her immense fortune and rare attractions justly intitled her to their homage, and I was neither
vain

vain enough nor base enough to attempt a competition.

As in myself I was wholly devoid of passion, I had neither eyes nor apprehension for the discernment of hers. Though I had often seen, I seldom had any kind of converse with her, and, where the head is engaged and, in a manner, absorbed by business, there is neither leisure nor room for love to enter the heart. On the other hand, a person affected can instantly penetrate the bosom of the party beloved, and there discern a vacant and insensible heart as legibly as a priest of Isis could decypher hieroglyphics.

One day, as I happened to pass near her anti-chamber, I heard the warble, as I thought, of distant and ætherial music. I approached toward the sound, the door was on the jar, and, gently opening it, I entered and stood behind her unperceived. She sat and sang to her lute. The words were Shakespeare's, but sweetly set by herself. They expressed that passage in his play of Twelfth Night, where it is said of Viola, *She never told her love, but let concealment, like a worm in the bud, feed on her damask cheek, &c.* Ah, how affectingly did her instrument answer to her voice, while she gently tuned her sighs to the soft and melancholy cadences. My breast

breast was so swelled by a mixture of anguish and compassion that I could no longer wholly suppress a rising groan. Here at she started and turned, and, rising suddenly, her eyes shot fire, and her face glowed with indignation and resentment. But, observing the tears that still trickled down my cheeks, her countenance was as suddenly changed into kindness, and she cast upon me a look of inexpressible complacency.

Ah, Mr. Harry, says she, I see, I see that you have a gentle and a kindred kind of heart, and that, if ever you happen to love, you will love with great tenderness.—Have you ever loved, Mr. Harry? — Indeed, Madam, I cannot say! my commerce has been very little among the Ladies. If I met love on my way, or even found it in my heart, perhaps I should not rightly know what to make of it. But, my Matilda, my charming sister, (your father has honoured me with the privilege of calling you by that dear that tender name) why will you not entrust your best your truest friend with the secret of your disquiet? whoever the object of your esteem may be, I here solemnly engage, at the risque of my life and the loss of my fortune, to bring him voluntarily to pay his vows at your feet.

O,

O, my sister, I would to Heaven that he had now been present, as I have been present, to have his soul melted and impressed as mine has been; his heart must have been harder than the stones of Thebes, if you did not attract it and move it, at pleasure, by the touch of those fingers and the bewitchment of those accents.---Ah, you flatterer, she cried, with a voice tuned to harmony, and a face formed of smiles, you almost tempt me to tell you what, for the world, I would not wish that any one in the world should know. But, I must snatch myself from the danger.---So saying, and casting at me a vanishing glance, she was out of sight in an instant.

As our suitors had now been dismissed and our assemblies discontinued, Miss Golding seemed quite pleased with our domestic quiet, which giving us frequent opportunities of being together, I endeavoured, by a variety of tender offices and little amusements, to dispel or divert the melancholy under which I thought she laboured. I was greatly surprized at my own success on this occasion; her cheerfulness returned; she discovered new and striking graces in her manners and conversation, and in a little time did not appear to want any consolation.

One day, being on the Exchange, I was accosted by a Jew, who told me that he wanted a sum of money and would either sell or pawn to me a jewel of great price. It was a solitaire composed of oriental pearls, with a diamond of the first water and magnitude in the center : After some chaffering, we agreed for three thousand pieces, and I put it into my pocket-book. As my business detained me on the Exchange till it was late, I dined with two or three acquaintances at the chop-house, and did not return till the evening was advanced.

On my entering, I was told that Mr. Golding was abroad, and that Miss Matilda had just ordered coffee for some ladies in her dressing-room. Immediately I ran up and opened the door without ceremony, but was instantly struck with the look which she turned toward me, a look that at once intimated dejection and disgust. During coffee, I endeavoured to behave with my usual unconcern, but found it impossible to avoid sharing in that constraint under which Miss Matilda most evidently laboured ; in short, a gloomy stiffness spread through the whole conversation, and I believe no two persons in company were rightly satisfied with each other.

As

As soon as the cups were removed, the fair visitants got up; and, as Miss Golding pressed them to stay, in a manner that rather denoted her desire of their absence, they feigned a further engagement, and very formally took their leaves.

When she had seen them to the door, and that I had handed them into their carriages, she turned without speaking to me and withdrew towards her own apartment. I followed, and, as she was about to enter, my Matilda, my sister, said I, with a voice of cordial tenderness, do your Harry the favour to accept this trifle, as an instance of my regard for the daughter of my friend, for the dearest object, upon earth, of my esteem and affection. So saying I presented her with my recent purchase; she did not however, even deign to look at it; but, surveying me from head to foot with an eye of strange passions, she took it and dashed it against the floor, and, rushing into her chamber, she shut the door upon me without speaking a word.

I stood in an inconceivable astonishment and concern. In vain I searched and researched my memory for the recollection of some instance wherein I might have offended her; but, not presuming to obtrude upon her in order to question

24 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

or expostulate with her, I retreated to my apartment under the deepest dejection of spirits.

Mr. Golding did not return till it was late in the evening. He immediately sent for me. Harry, says he, what is the matter, has any thing happened amiss? I never saw you look so discomposed. Indeed, Sir, I am not as well as I could wish. Bless me! we had better send for a doctor. No, Sir, I am in hopes it will soon be over.——Where is Matilda?—In her chamber, Sir, I believe.——He then called Mrs. Susan, and bid her tell Matilda that he desired to speak with her, but she answered that her Mistress was gone to bed indisposed, and requested that she might not be disturbed.

Supper being served up, we sat down in silence, and, as neither of us offered to taste a bit, I rose, wished Mr. Golding a good-night, and retired to my chamber.

After a sleepless night, my servant entered in a visible alarm, and told me that Miss Golding was extremely ill, and that almost all the Physicians in London had been sent for.

Very unhappy were many succeeding days. I saw my friend, my father, the man I loved above the world, I saw him

in

in a depth of distress that bordered on distraction, and I found my heart wrung with inexpressible anguish.

Though I was constant in my enquiries after Miss Golding, yet I purposely avoided appearing in her presence, lest the sight of one so obnoxious should add to her distemper. At length, the good old man came to me, wringing his hands, will you not go Harry, says he, will you not go and see Matilda before she dies? The doctors tell me they have tried all the powers of medicine, but that they do not yet know what to make of her sickness.

My dear Sir, said I, it is then no longer time to conceal from you what I know or conjecture concerning this matter. Miss Matilda, herself, entrusted me with the secret, but under the strictest injunctions of silence; the extremity of her case, however, ought to dispense with all such engagements. Your daughter loves, Sir, she loves with passion, but who the object of her affections is I cannot imagine. Let it be your part to discover what she so industriously hides from the world, she will refuse nothing to the authority, or rather to the tenderness of such a parent.

Here Mr. Golding left me, but returned in about an hour. His whole

26 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

frame seemed to labour with something extraordinary. You were right, Harry, he cried, you were right in your conjectures; my prayers and my tears have at length prevailed! With difficulty I have wrung the secret from her. O, my son! it is greatly in your power to befriend us. Would you not do something for the relief of a family who doat upon you as we do? would you not do something for your old friend who loves you as fondly as ever father loved a child? Something for you, Sir?—said I, yes, every thing, all things that are possible to be done. But, pray Sir, do I know the party? You do, Harry, you do, he cried, for, as the prophet said unto David, “thou art the man.”

I, Sir! I exclaimed, impossible! she cannot bear my sight, she hates me, she detests the ground I go upon. Not so, said he, not so, she loves the very dust upon which you tread. Something surely is due in mitigation of the calamities which you have occasioned. We lie at your mercy, Mr. Clinton, my precious daughter and myself! It is yours to bid us live or die at your pleasure, to crush us into nothing, or to restore us to existence, to health, to enjoyment. Will it hurt you, my son, to do us these great benefits? is it a matter grievous to you
to.

to give happiness to those, whose excess of love for you is their only misfortune? A princely fortune attends you. We and all we have are yours, Mr. Clinton. We are desirous of depending on your bounty alone. Let the excess of my daughter's affection for you, excite something more kindly than hatred in your breast. If not for her sake, yet for mine, my beloved Harry, let me beseech you to constrain yourself before her, to affect some little tenderness, some appearance of regard, that may revive her, awhile at least, from the deplorable state under which she languishes.

While he spoke I was agitated by unutterable emotions, and he might have proceeded much farther, before I should have had the power to reply. At length, I cast myself on my knee, and catching his hand to my bosom, ah, my friend, my father, my dear father, I cried, am I then no better than a barbarian in your sight? To me would you impute such sentiments of cruelty and ingratitude? Take my hand, Sir, take my heart, dispose of them as you please. All that I have, all that I am is yours and your daughter's, without any kind of reserve for any other person breathing.

28 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

The good man caught me in his arms and pressed me to his breast in a long and speechless extacy; then, taking me by the hand, he led me in silence to his daughter's apartment.

As we entered she turned her Eyes toward the door, and her pale and languid countenance was straight suffused with a short lived red. I was so affected by the condition in which I beheld her, that I scarcely was able to reach her bed-side, where kneeling down I gently took one of her hands, and pressing it between mine, I bathed it in a silent shower of tears.

Ah, my papa, she faintly cried, I fear you have betrayed me! Mr. Harry is certainly informed of my weakness. I am informed, said I, my lovely, my all-beloved sister, I am informed that I am permitted to hope for a happiness that is infinitely above my merit, but it shall be the delightful business of my life to deserve it.

My dear, said Mr. Golding, I perceive you are something flurried, your constitution is too weak for such emotions as these. For the present your brother Harry must leave you. To-morrow, I trust, you will be better able to support our company.

Hereupon

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 29

Hereupon I took her hand, and, impressing upon it a tender and warm kiss, I just ventured to look up, and saw her fine eyes suffused with a glittering tear, and her countenance bent upon me with a look of inexpressible sweetness and delight; but Mr. Golding, to prevent the effects of too tender a scene, instantly took me by the arm and led me away.

As he perceived that my spirits had been much disturbed, he ordered a bottle of wine to his own chamber, and told me that he requested some further converse with me. As soon as we had taken our seats, he looked earnestly upon me, then seized me by the hand, and looked at me again: But suddenly getting up, he turned and stepped to the window, and, breaking into tears, he there wept and sobbed for good part of an hour.

As soon as he was somewhat composed, he resumed his seat. Mr. Clinton, says he, are you really sincere in your professions with respect to my daughter? Shall I be rid of my doubts at once? May I venture to ask you a question, on which my own life, as well as that of my child, may depend? Should it please the Almighty to raise her from her present bed of sickness, is it actually your intention to make her your wife?

30 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Here I demanded with some warmth, is that a question, Sir, at this time? What reason have I given you to suspect my honour or my truth?—I do not suspect you, my Harry, I do not suspect you; I know you would not deceive me, but you may have deceived yourself. Your nature is tender and full of pity, and, in the deplorable estate in which my girl lies, your great compassion may have easily been mistaken by you for love. Your friendship for me also may have helped to impose upon you, and you may have construed your regard and attachment to the father into a sentiment of tenderness and affection for the child. But O, my Harry, should any other woman be preferable in your eyes; or should it not be in my girl's power to win and wear your affections, I shall then have been instrumental in making you wretched, and my heart may as well be broken the one way as the other.—No, my father, no. I have no foreign Dalilahs, no secret amours, no pleasures that shun the light. My heart is a virgin heart, and my Matilda possesses it without a rival.

From the time that I was sensible of my father's partiality, a little matter of ambition, whether laudable or otherwise, incited me to attempt a distinction that
would

would raise me toward a level with an only brother who looked down with neglect and contempt upon me. Thence I became indefatigable in my studies at school and college, as also in my application under you, Sir, during the first years of my apprenticeship, and this left me no manner of leisure for female attachments. Indeed I dreaded the appearance of any advances from the sex, and turned from them as I would from so many gins or pitfalls purposely dug for my destruction. My conversation, Sir, has been very little among the fair, and, I never, till very lately, conceived a liking for any woman. In truth, my dear father, that lady is not alive whom my judgment or inclinations would prefer to your Matilda. You need not fear my being wretched, I think myself most happy in her affections.

Then, said he, I pronounce her the happiest of women. And now, my Harry, I will tell you a secret. From the first time that I beheld you, I wished you for my daughter, I wished that she might have charms to attract and fix your heart; but, as I feared, and was persuaded that this was not the case, I forbore to indulge myself in such flattering expectations. You know I never took you with me to see her at the boarding-school, the true

32 THE FOOL OF QUALITY,

reason was, that I dreaded exposing her young and inexperienced heart to such a temptation, lest she should conceive and languish under a hopeless passion.

On her return to town, my apprehensions, on your score, were much abated, as I imagined that the great number of her gay and glittering suitors would divide or at least divert her attention from you; and I purposely laid all the business of our house on your shoulders, that she might have as little of your company as possible.

I further had the precaution to warn my child against the danger of any affection for you. Matty, said I, one day, among all this assembly of fair and fortunate youths, you are free and welcome to chuse your companion for life, there is only one who stands excepted, one only whom you must not look upon with any eye of expectation. Who is that, papa? My young brother and partner in trade, said I. He looks much higher, Matty, than to the daughter of a merchant. His prospects are immense. He is only brother and heir to the earl of Moreland who is now on his travels, a dissolute young man, whose vices in all likelihood will quickly carry him off, and, in such a case, our Harry Clinton would
be

be considered as one of the first persons in the land.

Ah! Sir, I cried, I may bless your prohibition with regard to me, it was certainly the happy, the only cause of my Matilda's partiality in my favour. The good man smiled and proceeded. Notwithstanding what I said to Matty, I had not given up all thoughts of you myself. While she talked or sung in your presence, I often turned my eye upon you, and thought, at times, that I perceived a growing tenderness in your behaviour, which, further acquaintance, I trusted might ripen into love. But when, in order to try you, I proposed your advocacy in behalf of Spelling, and that you appeared to undertake it with readiness and pleasure, I at once dropped all my fond and flattering hopes concerning you, and I heartily wished that my child had accepted that modest and worthy young man. Blessed, however, be the favouring hand of that Providence, who, so unexpectedly, hath conducted matters to the issue of this hour, and fulfilled the capital wish of my life. But I will no longer delay carrying to my dear child the glad tidings of your affection; it will prove the best of balms to her wounded mind,

34 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

and will close her eyes, for this night, in rest and peace of heart.

I was scarce dressed the next morning, when Matilda's favourite maid entered my chamber and bid me good morrow. Mrs. Susan, said I, your pleasant countenance bids me presume that Miss Golding is better.—O, vastly better, vastly better, Sir, I assure you ; she slept sweetly all the night, and did not want for happy dreams neither, I warrant.—Here is something for your good news.—No, Sir, no, I never take money from gentlemen ; my mistress's generosity does not leave me to the temptation. I love my mistress, Sir, and I think we ought all rather to join and see you, Mr. Harry, as well for yesterday's visit, as for another which I hope you will pay her to-day. A fiddle for these old doctors, one pretty young doctor is better worth than a score of them.—Susan, as it should seem, had been an observer, and did not want for penetration in such matters.—Mr. Harry, she continued, I would give my last quarter's wages to know what charm it is that you carry about you, to make all the pretty ladies so fond of you.—In truth, Mrs. Susan, I am equally a stranger to the charm and to the fondness that you talk of.—Do not tell me, Sir, do not tell

tell me. The very day of that night on which my mistress fell sick, here was a lady in her chariot to enquire for you, one of the loveliest young creatures I ever set my eyes on. I know she asked very particularly and very affectionately for you; for though it was my mistress to whom she spoke, I stood within hearing.—It must, I cried, have been some mistake or some imposture, for I assure you, Mrs. Susan, that I know of no such person. But pray be so good as to bear my compliments to your young lady, and tell her that I wait her permission to attend her.

I forgot to tell you, Madam, that agreeable to the advice which Mr. Golding had given me, I went to felicitate my uncle Goodall on his marriage with your mother. He had already been informed of my recent admission into partnership, and thereupon received me with very unusual marks of esteem and affection.

Your mother, at that time, was exceeding lovely in her person and manners, at every season of leisure I frequented their house, and she conceived a very tender and warm friendship for me, but, during Miss Golding's illness, I had not been to visit them.

Susan

36 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Susan was but just gone, when Mr. Golding came and told me that he believ'd his Matty would be pleased to see me. I instantly obeyed the summons. As I entered, I observed that she sat up in her bed, a morning-gown was wrapped about her, and, Susan, with the help of pillows, supported her behind. On my appearing, her spirits again took the alarm. She scarce ventured a glance toward me. I was greatly pained by the abashment under which I saw she laboured, and I hastened to relieve myself as well as her from the distress.

I sat down by the bed-side, and gently taking one of her hands, without looking in her face, my dear Miss Golding, said I, I hope you will not be jealous of your papa's affection for me. He has, indeed, been too partial, too generous toward me, and has approved himself more than a father to me. He is not satisfied with allowing me to call you by the tender name of sister, he farther gives me leave to hope that I may be united to you by the nearest and dearest of all ties. Nothing but your consent is wanting, my sister, to make me the happiest of mankind. You are silent, my Matilda, may I venture to call you mine? Blessed be your silence, my angel, I will dare then
to

to interpret it in my own favour?—Indeed I should long since have made the present declaration, I should long since have avowed my inclinations, my affection, my passion for you; but I did not presume to listen to my own heart on the occasion, I did not suffer it to tell you how much you were beloved. Amidst so many suitors of the first rank and merit, who were justly called together by your numberless attractions, I deemed it a flight by much too high for me, to aspire at a competition for the happiness of your hand.

Here, venturing to look up, I perceived that she had put her handkerchief to her eyes. Ah! Mr. Clinton, she cried with a trembling voice, you are very delicate, you are sweetly delicate, indeed; but ought I to take the advantage of this delicacy? I see that you would save me from the confusion of an avowal, you would save me from the mortifying sensibility of my own weakness. But, Sir, you ought not to esteem that a weakness in me, which I account my chiefest merit, and which is my chiefest pride. I am proud of my gratitude, I am proud of my discernment. From the moment that you preserved me, against arms and against odds, at the great peril of your own life, in you, and you alone, I saw every thing
that

38 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

that was amiable, every thing that was excellent. But then I dreaded lest all women should behold you with my eyes; and, above all, I doubly dreaded and was fearfully assured that you never would have any eyes or attention for me. You have at length seen, or are rather informed of my malady. You pity me, you wish to relieve me, and you would love me if you could. It is enough, Mr. Harry, even this perhaps is quite as much of happiness as I can bear.

Here, again, I began to profess and to protest the sincerity and ardour of my affections; but she cut me short and said, I know your sincerity, Sir, you are persuaded that you love me, because as yet you know not what love is. True love, Mr. Harry, by its own light, sees into and throughout the bosom of the party beloved: I am very sensible of the tenderness of your friendship for me, and that sensibility constitutes the whole of my happiness. I trust also that it is all the happiness I shall ever desire. To see you, to hear you, to have you with me, to gaze upon you while you are looking another way, to be permitted to attend, to serve you, to conduce to your satisfactions, it is a lot that will lift me above that of mortality, that will cause me to account myself the first among women.

Ah,

Ah, I cried, can I say nothing, can I do nothing to convince you how dear, how exceedingly dear you are to me? I certainly loved you, long before I knew what it was to be a lover. I now feel the united force of those imperceptible degrees by which the pleasing intruder daily stole and grew upon me. Believe me, my Matilda, when I presumed to present you with this as a token of my affection, I held it for a trifle altogether unworthy of you; accept it, however, I beseech you, for the sake of the giver.

And, is this the gem, says she, which I cast from me with such disdain?—Forgive me, my brother, it is just so that the world casts from them the pearl of much mightier price. I would to heaven, that I could reject all the pomps, pleasures and vanities of this transitory world, with the same aversion that I spurned from me this estimable jewel; but there is very little hope of that, Mr. Harry, while you yourself may be partly numbered among transitory things.

Here I was quite overcome by the affection of the dear girl, and, urged on by a sudden transport, I caught her to my bosom with a force that was something too much for her weakness. On recollection, I attempted to apologize for my
indiscretion,

indiscretion, but she sweetly cried, Ah! Mr. Harry, never repent of such faults, may I often, may I daily tempt you to be guilty of them. But tell me, and tell me truly, Mr Clinton; these gems, when you first purchased them, were they actually intended for me? were they not rather intended for your Fanny, for your own Fanny, Mr. Clinton? What can you mean? I exclaimed, I know of no Fanny in the universe with whom I have any acquaintance. That is strange! she replied, very extraordinary, indeed! but, lest you should think me of a jealous or whimsical temper, I will relate the affair to you precisely as it happened.

On the day in which I took to my bed, I was looking out at the parlour-window, when a chariot whirled up to our door. I observed a single lady in it, whom I supposed of my acquaintance, and instantly sent Susan to request her to walk in. On her entering, I was greatly struck by the beauty of her figure, and eyed her very inquisitively from head to foot. Having curtesied gracefully to me, can you tell me, Miss, says she, is Mr. Clinton at home? No, indeed, Madam, said I; but if you will be pleased to entrust me with your commands.—It is only, Miss, that I request to see him

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 41

as soon as possible.—And pray, Madam, where shall he attend you?—O, he will know that instantly, when you tell him it was Fanny Goodall, his own Fanny Goodall who was here to wait upon him.—Good Heaven, I cried out, my aunt, my aunt Goodall, my very aunt, I assure you!—What do you say, what do you tell me, your aunt, Sir, can it be? Ah, she is too young, and too lovely to be an aunt, Mr. Harry.—The very same, indeed, Madam, there is no other Fanny Goodall. I admit, as you say, that she is young and exceeding lovely, but still she is a wife, and likely soon, as I think, to be a mother. Alas! says my Matilda, what a doleful jest is this! a cruel aunt she has been to me I am sure, what days of sighs and nights of tears she has cost me! Ah, that heart-breaking term, *his own, his own* Fanny; I think I shall never be able to forgive her that expression!

As Mr. Golding just then entered, we dropped the subject we were upon. Why Matty, says he, you are quite another creature; I think I never saw you wear so happy a face. I know you are come to chide me, says she, for keeping your partner from business; but pay me down the portion you intended for me, papa, and I will reimburse you the damage of every

42 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

every hour of his absence. Yes, my love, cries the tender father, if wealth might serve ; for wages, to a heart like that of my Harry, he shall be very amply payed for every act and instance of his affection and attention to you. Every hour of my life, I cried, is already her due ; she has nothing to pay to one who is her debtor beyond account.

During several following days, Miss Golding recovered with amazing rapidity. In less than five weeks she looked plumper and fairer than ever. Peace smiled in her countenance. Joy laughed in her eyes. Her whole frame appeared as actuated by some internal music. And thus, all lovely and beloved, she was given up to my arms, in the presence of my uncle and aunt, and of a few city friends.



FRIEND. As I wish that none of your faults should pass by me unnoticed, so I am willing to allow you all your just praises. Your story of your old friend, is, hitherto, very simple, natural, and domestic ; and, to a mind, yet undebauched, exceedingly interesting and affecting ; for it opens and investigates a number of
little

little passages and mazes in the heart, which are quite closed, or imperceptible to persons of hard nerves and callous conceptions. I am free, however, to tell you that I felt myself offended by the compliments which Mr. Clinton pays to himself through the mouth of your Matilda. It is, indeed, a very rare matter for people to speak of themselves with due decency and delicacy. I wish you could have procured some other conduit for conveying to us the history of your knight. Cæsar, I think, is the only person who, with an easy, though modest, confidence, has successfully ventured on a detail of his own exploits.

AUTHOR. I have not a word to say in Mr. Clinton's defence; perhaps he may offer something for himself on the occasion.



C H A P. XIV.

HERE the countess, for the first time, broke in upon her cousin's narration. Happy Matilda, she cried, how distinguished was thy destiny! were it but for a year, were it but for a day, for that day thou didst yet enjoy the consummation of all thy wishes, a lot rarely allowed

44 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

allowed to any daughter of Adam. I was not then born to envy her state. Sweet girl, she deserved you, she was after my own heart, the excess of her passion for you made her truly worthy of you. But tell me, my cousin, how could you be so long ignorant of the dear girl's affection for you? The language of love is so very intelligible, so expressive through every motion and every organ, as must, with sufficient clearness, have opened your eyes to the object. Indeed, Madam, replied Mr. Clinton, she herself led me away from any such apprehension by drawing so many pictures of the man whom she said she loved, all copied from the creature of her own brain, and covered and disguised with such imaginary excellencies as must have prevented myself, as well as every one living, from perceiving therein the smallest trace of my own resemblance. Do not tell me, cried Lady Maitland, she was a true and a sweet painter, and I should have known you by her portrait in the midst of a million. But proceed, I beseech you, my whole soul is in your story.

Within a few months after my marriage, continued Mr. Clinton, you, my cousin, first opened your fair eyes to the
light,

light, and my Matty and I had the honour of being your sponsors.

Within the first year of my marriage, my girl, also, brought a son into the world, and within the two years following was delivered of a daughter.

The joy of the grandfather, on those events, was inexpressible. Alas, good man! he thought that he perceived, in their infant aspects, a thousand happy promises and opening prospects. He saw himself, as it were, perpetuated in a descending and widening progeny, who, like their native Thames, should roll down in a tide of expanding wealth and prosperity. He wanted that all the world should participate of his happiness, and our house once more became the house of festivity.

A number of external successes, also, assisted to persuade us, in those days, that felicity was to be attained and ascertained upon earth. The regency of Cromwell was administered with the strictest justice at home, while, at the same time, it became revered and formidable abroad, and extended its influence to regions the most remote. Under the protection of the British flag, we sent our ships out to the east and to the west, and wealth came
pouring

46 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

pouring in upon us from all quarters of the globe.

In the mean while my wife and I lived together in perfect Harmony. Tho' my commerce and acquaintance were greatly extended, I had yet formed no friendships, from home, that partook of heart-felt tenderness, except for your mamma. All my pleasures and desires, all my world was, in a manner, confined and absorbed within the compass of my own walls. In the good old man and his daughter, and in the pledges of their endearing attachment to me, every wish that my soul could form was centered. Mutual joy sat round our board, mutual peace prepared our pillows ; and, during a swimming period of six years, I scarce remember to have experienced the smallest discontent, save what arose from the inordinancy of my wife's affection for me.

While she continued to bless my arms, I thought that no one had ever loved with greater warmth than I loved her ; and yet, at times I remarked a very striking difference between the manner and effects of our feelings for each other. If business detained me an hour extraordinary abroad, the panting of her bosom, that eagerness of look with which she received me, was to me a painful evidence

dence of her anxiety during my absence. One evening I found her in fainting fits, merely because she was told that a duel had just happened between Lord Mohun and a person who had much the resemblance of Mr. Clinton. In short, if my head or my finger ached, I found myself under the necessity of concealing my ailment, and of assuming a chearfulness disagreeable to the occasion, to prevent the worse consequences of her ready alarms. On the other hand, my affection was tranquil and serene ; it was tender and fervent, indeed, but without tumult or disturbance ; a species of love which I afterwards found to be by far the most eligible ; for every kind of passion is unquestionably a kind of suffering ; love in God, therefore, must be wholly an action, it acts infinitely upon others without any possibility of being acted upon.

Thus the years of my life moved onward upon down, when the small-pox, that capital enemy to youth and beauty, became epidemical in the city. Our children caught the contagion. All possible care was taken, and all possible art employed. A number of physicians was kept constantly about them. Fifteen days of their illness were already elapsed, and the doctors pronounced them out of danger ;

48 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

ger; when the distemper took a sudden and malignant turn, and, in one and the same minute, both my babes expired in the arms of their mother.

I was in the room at the time, and as I knew the extreme tenderness of my Matty's nature, all my concern, as well as attention, was turned upon her. I took her fondly by the hand, and, looking up to her face, I was instantly alarmed and shocked by that placid serenity which appeared in her countenance, and which I expected to be quickly changed into some frantic eruption. But, first dropping a smiling tear on her infants, and then lifting her glistening eyes to heaven, I thank thee, I thank thee, O my master, she cried, thou hast made me of some use; I have not been born in vain; thou hast ordained me the humble vehicle of two safe and certain angels, living attendants on thy throne, and sweet singers of thy praises in the kingdom of little children, for ever and for ever. I have yet sufficient left, more blessings remaining than suit the lot of mortality; take me from them, I beseech thee, whenever it is thy good pleasure, for I fear there are some of them, which I could not, I could not bear to have taken away from me. So prayed the dear saint, and looking
eagerly

eagerly at me, no, my Harry, she cried out, I fear, I fear I could not bear it! So saying, she suddenly cast herself into my bosom, and grasping at my neck, and gushing into a flood of anguish, we mingled our sobs and our tears together till no more were left to be shed.

You are affected, my dearest cousin; I had better stop here. If you are moved by small matters, how must your heart be wrung by some ensuing distresses; I must not venture to proceed.

Go on! cried the Countess, Go on, I insist upon it. I love to weep! I joy to grieve! It is my happiness, my delight to have my heart broken in pieces.

We were both of us, he proceeded, much relieved by the vent of our mutual passion, for, though my wife still continued to keep to me and cling about me, she yet seemed to be sweetly composed, and sunk, within my arms, as into a bed of peace.

At length I listened to a kind of murmur and bustle in the hall, and I heard some one distinctly cry, O my master, my master!

We started up at the instant. Mr. Golding had been from home at the time of the deadly crisis of my two darling little ones, and had quieted all his fears, and renewed all his prospects, in the view and

50 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

full assurance of their life and quick recovery. We had been too much engaged and occupied in our own personal griefs, to give to our servants the seasonable precaution of breaking the matter to our father by unalarming degrees; and a rude fellow at his entrance, bluntly told him that the children were both dead; whereupon he clapped his hands together, and, casting himself into a chair, remained without sense or motion.

When we ran up, we were greatly terrified by the manner of his aspect, though his eyes were closed, his brows were gloomy and contracted, while the nether part of his face looked quiet and composed.

I instantly sent for a surgeon, and recalled the physicians who had but lately left us, while my Matty stood motionless, with her hands closed together and her eyes fixed upon her father. At length she cried out, my papa, my papa, my dear papa, I would, I would I had died before I came to this hour! But blessed be thy will, since it is thy will, O God! when all other props are fapped and plucked from under me, I trust to fall into thee, my father, which art in heaven!

Being put to bed, and bled, he recovered motion and speech, and we got him

to

to swallow a composing draught, though he did not yet recollect any person or thing about him.

Notwithstanding our late fatigues, Matty and I sat up with him most of the night; and then, ordering a pallet to be brought into the room, we lay down to take a little rest toward morning. Alas, said I to myself, how rich was I yesterday, how is my world abridged! these narrow walls now contain all that is left me of all the possessions that I value upon earth.

Poor Mr. Golding was but ill qualified to bear calamity. His life had been a life of sound health and successes; and he never had been acquainted with sickness, or with affliction, save on the death of his wife, whom he had married for money, and on the illness of his daughter as already related.

As he had taken an opiate, he did not awaken till it was late in the day. Turning his head toward me, is it you. Harry, says he? How do you find yourself, Sir, said I? Why, has any thing been the matter with me? Indeed I do not feel myself right; but send my children to me. Send my Jacky and my little Harriet; the sight of them will be a restorative beyond all the

52 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

cordials in the world. — You are silent, Harry! — What is the meaning? — O, now I begin to remember! My sweet babies, my little play-fellows, I shall never see you any more!

Here he burst into the most violent gush of passion. He groaned, he wept, he cried aloud with heart-piercing exclamations, while I caught up Matty in my arms, and, running with her to a distant apartment, caught a kiss and locked her in.

I returned, but found him in the same violence of agitation. I spoke to him, I would have comforted him; but he cried, be quiet, Harry, I will not be comforted. I will go to my children! They shall not be torn from me! We will die! We will be buried! We will lie in the same grave together.

As I found myself sick, and ready to faint under the oppression of his lamentations, I withdrew to the next chamber, and there plentifully vented the contagious shower.

After some time I listened and perceived that all was quiet, and, returning, I found him in a kind of troubled doze; from whence he fell into a deep and peaceful sleep. Thus he continued, for three days, wailing and slumbering
by

by fits, without tasting any matter of nourishment, though his daughter and I implored him on our knees, and with tears. No reasonings, no entreaties could avail for appeasing him. It was from the association of our sorrows alone that he appeared to admit of any consolation.

At length his passion subsided into a fullen and silent calm; he would speak to no body! He would answer none of us except by monosyllables.

Within a few following weeks, news was brought me that our ship the Phoenix was arrived in the Downs, safe and richly laden from the East-Indies.

Immediately I carried the tidings to the old man, in the pleasing expectation that they would serve to divert, or, at least, to amuse his melancholy. But, fixing his look upon me, wherefore, Harry, dost thou tell me of ships and Indies, he cried? Both Indies are poor to me, they have nothing that they can send me. I have no road to go upon earth, no way upon sea to navigate! I am already become a wild and wasted Babylon, wherein the voice of music shall never more be heard. O ye old and unblest knees, where are now your precious babies, who were wont to play about ye, and cling and climb upon ye? Gone, gone, gone, gone, never, never to return.

54 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Here, breaking into tears, I cried, we are both young yet, my father; we may have many children to be the comfort of your age. No, my Harry, no, he replied! You may, indeed, have many children, but you will never have any children like my darling children.

Love, as it should seem, my cousin, like bodies, has it's weight, and gains additional velocity in the descent. It descends from God to his creatures, and so from creature to creature, but rarely knows a due return of affection or gratitude. It is therefore incomparably more intense in the parent than in the child, and still acquires encreasing fondness toward the grandchild, and so downward. Nay, you may almost universally observe it more warm in patrons toward their dependents, than in those who are benefited toward their benefactors.

Mr. Golding, from this time, no more entered his counting-house, nor paid nor received visits, nor kept up any correspondence. Even my company, and that of his daughter, appeared to oppress him, and he rarely left his apartment, where an old folio bible was his only companion.

Hereupon I began to withdraw our effects from trade, and having called in the best part of them, I lodged near half a million in the Dutch funds.

When

When I went to advise with my father on the occasion, what, my child, said he, what have I to say to the world, or the things of the world? Do just as you please with the one and with the other; and never consult a person on any affair wherein he has no interest or concern.

One morning as I lay in bed, Matty threw her arms about me, and hiding her blushing face in my bosom, my Harry, says she, if you could handsomely bring it about to my poor papa, perhaps it would be some matter of consolation to him to know that I am with child.

When I broke the matter to him, he did not at first appear to be sensibly affected; in time, however, the weight of his affliction seemed considerably lightened, and, as my wife advanced in her pregnancy, he began to look us in the face, he sat with us at one table, and became conversable as formerly.

One day I went to dine with Mr. Settle, a hardware merchant, who had appointed to pay me a large sum of money. On my return in the evening, through Moorfields, attended only by my favourite Irishman, a very faithful and active fellow, though it was yet fair day, I was suddenly set upon by a posse of robbers, who rushed on me from behind a co-

56 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

ver. The first of them running up fired directly in my face, but did me no further damage than by carrying away a small piece of the upper part of my left ear. Had the fools demanded my money, I would have given it to them at a word; but finding them bent on murder, I resolved that they should have my life at as dear a rate as possible. I instantly drew my sword, and run the first through the body; and then, rushing on the second assailant, I laid him also on the ground, before he had time to take his aim, so that his pistol went harmlessly off in his fall.

In the mean while my brave and loving companion was not idle; with two strokes of his oaken cudgel he had levelled two more of them with the earth. Hereupon the remainder halted, retreated into a group, and then stood and fired upon us altogether; but, observing that we did not drop, they cast their arms to the ground, and run off several ways as fast as they could. My good friend, Tirlah O'Donnoh, then turned affectionately to me, are you hurt, my dear master, says he? I believe I am, Tirlah, let us make home the best we can. O, cried the noble creature, if no body was hurt but Tirlah, Tirlah would not be hurt at all.

Here,

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 57

Here, taking me under the arm, we walked slowly to the city, till coming to a hackney coach he put me tenderly into it, and, sitting beside me, supported me, as I began to grow weak through much effusion of blood.

As soon as we got home, the coachman, as is their practice, thundered at the door, and my Matty, according to custom whenever I was abroad, was the readiest of all our domestics to open it.

By this time I had fainted, and was quite insensible; but when my tender and true mate saw me borne by two men into her presence, all pale and bloody, she, who thought she had fortitude to support the wreck of the world, gave a shriek that was enough to alarm the neighbourhood, and instantly falling backward, got a violent contusion in the hinder part of her head.

Immediately we were conveyed to separate beds, and all requisite help was provided. It was found that I had received six or seven flesh wounds, but none of them proved dangerous, as they were given at a distance and by pistol shot. But, alas, my Matty's case was very different, she fell into sudden and premature labour, and, having suffered extreme anguish all the night, during which

58 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

she ceased not to enquire after me, she was with difficulty delivered of a male infant, who was suffocated in the birth.

In the mean while, the good and tender-hearted old gentleman hurried about, incessantly, from one of us to the other, wringing his hands, and scarcely retaining his senses.

As soon as my wounds were dressed, and I had recovered my memory, I looked about, and hastily enquired for my wife; but they cautiously answered me, that she was something indisposed with the fright which she got at seeing me bloody, and that her father had insisted on her going to bed.

On the second dressing of my wounds, I was pronounced out of danger, and then they ventured to tell me of my Matty's miscarriage, and of the bruize which she had got in her fall when she fainted. On hearing this my heart was cleft, as it were in twain; I accused myself of the murder of my wife and infant; and I accused all, without exception, of their indiscretion in not concealing my disaster from her.

At times I began to fear that my wife was either dead, or much worse than they represented. On my third dressing, therefore, I peremptorily insisted on my being carried

carried into her chamber. I sent her notice of my visit, and, on entering the room, he lives then, she cried, my husband, my Harry lives ! It is enough, I shall die happy, I shall now depart in peace.

Here I ordered myself to be laid by her side, when taking a hand which she had feebly reached out, and pressing it to my lips, you would forsake me then, my Matty ! You die, you say, and you die happy in leaving me the most wretched, the most desolate of men. You die, my love, you die ; and I, who would have fostered you and your babe with my vitals, it is I who have dug a grave for the one and for the other. But, you must not forsake me, my Matty, I will not be forsaken by you. Since we cannot live afunder, let us die, let us die together !

Here a passionate silence ensued on either part. But, my wounds growing painful and beginning to bleed afresh, I was obliged to be carried back to my own apartment.

Within a few days more, I was so well recovered as to be able to walk about, from which time I was a constant attendant on my beloved, and became her most tender and assiduous nursekeeper.

I

You

60 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

You must have heard, my cousin, that the customs and manners of those times were altogether the reverse of what they are at present. Hypocrisy is no longer a fault among men; all now is avowed libertinism and open profaneness; and children scoff at the name and profession of that religion which their fathers revered. On the contrary, in those days, all men were either real or pretended zealots; every mechanic professed, like Aaron, to carry a *urim* and *thummim* about him; and no man would engage in any business or bargain, though with an intent to overreach his neighbour, without going apart, as he said, to consult the Lord.

My Matty, at the same time, was the holiest of all saints, without any parade of sanctification. Her's was a religion, of whose value she had the daily and hourly experience; it was, indeed, a religion, of power. It held her, as on a rock, in the midst of a turbulent and fluctuating world. It gave her a peace of spirit that smiled at provocation. It gave her comfort in affliction, patience in anguish, exaltation in humiliation, and triumph in death.

In about five weeks after her unhappy miscarriage, she appeared on the recovery, though by very slow degrees, and
with

with assistance, at times, sat up in her bed; when her oldest physician, one morning, called me apart, I am loath, Sir, said he, very loath to acquaint you with my apprehensions. I wish I may be mistaken, but I fear greatly for you! I fear that your dear lady cannot recover. By the symptoms, I conjecture that an abscess, or imposthume, is forming within her; but a few days will ascertain matters either for us or against us.

Had all sorts of evil tidings come crouding one upon another, I should not have been affected as I then was affected. I could not rise from my seat to bid the doctor adieu. My knees trembled under me! A swimming came before my eyes! and a sudden sickness relaxed and reversed my whole frame. Alas, I had not, at that time, the resource of my Matty; I had not on the armour with which she was armed to all issues and events, I, however raised my thoughts to heaven, in a kind of helpless acquiescence rather than confident resignation. I struggled, not to appear weaker than became my manhood, and I said to myself, Doctors have often been mistaken.

Having re-collected my strength and spirits the best I could, I ventured to enter my wife's apartment. She was just raised

raised in her bed, from whence her pale and emaciated countenance looked forth as the sun, toward his setting, looks through a sickly atmosphere, in confidence of his arising in the fulness of morning glory.

Having cautiously and dejectedly seated myself beside her, she reached out both her hands, and, pressing one of mine between them, I love you no longer, my Harry, she cried ! I love you no longer. Your rival, at length, has conquered. I am the bride of another. And yet I love you in a measure, since in you I love all that is him, or that is his, and that I think is much, a great deal, indeed, of all that is lovely. O, my dear, my sweet, mine only enemy, as I may say ! Riches were nothing unto me, pleasures were nothing unto me, the world was nothing unto me ; you, and you only, Harry, stood between me and my heaven, between me and my God. Long, and often, and vainly, have I strove and struggled against you ; but my bridegroom, at length, is become jealous of you ! My true owner calls me from you, and takes me all to himself ! Be not alarmed then, my Harry, when I tell you that I must leave you. You will grieve for me, you will
grieve

grieve greatly for me, my beloved! but, give way to the kindly shower that your Lord shed for his Lazarus, and let the tears of humanity alleviate and lighten the weight of your affliction. — Ah, my Harry, I tremble for you! What a course you have to run! — what perils! what temptations! Deliver him from them, my master, deliver him from them all! — Again, what blissful prospects! — They are gone, they are vanished! — I sink, I die under the weight and length of succeeding misery! — Again it opens! All is cleared, and his end, like that of Job, is more blessed than his beginning. — Ah, my Harry, my Harry, your heart must be wrung by many engines, it shall be tried in many fires, but I trust it is a golden heart, and will come forth with all its weight.

You have been dreaming, my love! I said, you have been dreaming; and the impression still lies heavy and melancholy on your memory.

Yes, she replied, I have been dreaming indeed; but then my dreams are much more real than my waking visions. When all things sensible are shut out, it is then that the spirit enlarges, grows conscious of its own activity, its own power and prescience, and sees by a
light

64 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

light whose evidence is beyond that of the sun. I will tell you a secret, my Harry, there is nothing in the universe but littleness and greatness, the littleness of the creature, and the greatness of God, and in the sense of this lies the essence of all philosophy and of all religion. Be content, then, with your lot, my husband, be content to be little, if you wish to be great. Become a nothingness, an emptiness, and then your God will bring the fulness of his own immensity upon you, and will open a world in your spirit more expanded and more glorious than this surrounding world with all its luminaries.

O, my angel, I cried, should any thing happen to you, I should then be little indeed. But I dare not look that way, for, I know, I find, I feel that I could not survive you.

You must survive me, my Harry, nay you will once more be married. I beheld your bride last night. Even now she stands before me, the sister of my spirit, and one of the loveliest compositions of sin and death, that ever was framed for dissolution. Her, also, you will lose; and you will think, nay, you will assure yourself that no powers in heaven and earth can avail for a ray of comfort.

comfort. In this life, however, you will finally, unexpectedly, and most wonderfully be blessed; and, soon after, we shall all meet and be more intimately and more endearingly wedded than ever; where yet there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

While she yet spoke, her pains, as the pains of labour, again came upon her, and went off, and again returned, after intermitted swoonings.

O, my cousin, what a solemn, what a fearful thing is death! All our inlets of knowledge and sensation closed at once! the sound of cheerfulness and the voice of friendship, and the comfort of light shut out from us for ever! Nothing before us but a blackness and depth of oblivion, or, beyond it, a doubtful and alarming sensibility, strange scenes, and strange worlds, strange associates, and strange perceptions, perhaps of horrid realities, infinitely worse than nonentity! Such are the brightest prospects of infidelity in death.

Where, at that time, are your scoffers, your defiers of futurity? where your merry companions, who turn their own eternity into matter of laugh and ridicule? Dejected and aghast, their countenance wholly fallen, and their heart
funk

66 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

sunk within them, they all tremble and wish to believe in this the hour of dissolution. They feel their existence sapped and sinking from under them; and nature compels them, in the drowning of their souls, to cry out to something, to any thing, Save, save, or I perish!

Far different was the state of my little and lowly Matty, my saint of saints, at that tremendous period; where all others would have sunk, there she soared aloft; and she dropped the world and it's wealth, with her body and all the sensible affections thereof, with the same satisfaction that a poor man, just come to a great estate, would drop his tattered garb to put on gorgeous apparel.

O, my beloved! she would cry in the midst of her pains, I have been weakly through life! I have been weakness itself, and therefore not able to take up thy cross! But be thou strong in my weakness, shew thy mightiness in me, and then lay it upon me with all it's weight!

Again, after a swoon, and when her pangs became excessive, I refuse not thy process, my master, she cried! Thy cross and thorny crown they are all my ambition. Point thy thorns, twist them harder, let them pierce into my soul, so thou suffer

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 67

suffer me not to fail or fall from thee,
I care not.

Think, my cousin, what I endured
upon that occasion! My rending heart
shared her sufferings, and felt pang for
pang. Nay, I was not far from mur-
muring and questioning with my God on
his putting to such tortures the most
guiltless of his creatures. If the lambs
of thy flock, I secretly said! If thy lambs
are appointed to such excruciating sensa-
tions, what must be the portion of such
sinners as I am?

When she drew near the goal of her
blessed course upon earth, O, my almigh-
ty Samson! she faintly cried, thou shake-
est the two pillars of my frail and sinful
fabric! Finish then thy conquest in me;
down, down with the whole building ap-
pointed to ruin! let no one, O Lord, of
mine enemies or of thine enemies escape
thy victorious arm! but slay all those by
my death, with whom I have been vainly
combating during my life-time! So say-
ing, her pains in an instant forsook her.
The form of her countenance was sud-
denly changed from the expression of
agony into that of extasy. She raised
her hands on high, and exerting herself
to follow them, she cried, I come, I
come! then sighed and dropped over.--

The

680 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

The muscles of her face still retained the stamp of the last sentiment of her soul, and while the body hastened to be mingled with earth, it seemed to partake of that heaven to which its spirit had been exalted.

You may think it odd, dearest Madam, that, for some time past, I have taken no note of the man to whom I was tied by every possible band of duty, gratitude and affection. The fact is, that, during the latter part of my wife's illness, and for some weeks after her death, Mr. Golding was confined to his chamber by a severe fit of the gout, and the acuteness of his pains scarce permitted him to attend to any other concern. While my Matty lived, therefore, I divided my time and assiduities as equally as I could between the daughter and father, and, at any intervals of ease, I used to read to him his favourite passages in the bible.

As soon as my saint had expired, I charged the servants not to give any intimation of her death to their master; but, alas, our silence and our looks were too sure indicators of the fatal tidings; for, from the highest to the least, my Matty had been the idol of the whole house

house, and her death appeared to them as the loss of every earthly possession.

Having looked, several times, intently and inquisitively in my face, well, Harry, says Mr. Golding, all is over then, I see! We must go to her, but my child shall no more return to us. — You are silent, my Harry. — O thou fell glutton, death! I had but one morsel left for the whole of my sustenance, and that too thou hast devoured. Here he gave a deep groan, and sunk into a state of insensibility, from which, however, he was soon recovered by the return of an agonizing fit of the gout.

When I look back, my fair cousin, on the passages of my life; it is a matter of amazement to me, that a creature so frail, so feebly and so delicately constituted as man, with nerves so apt to be racked, and a heart to be wrung with anguish, can possibly support the weights of calamity that, at times, are laid upon him.

I had not yet dropped a tear. I was in a state of half stupid and half flighty insensibility; as one who, having lost every thing, had nothing further to look for, and therefore nothing to regard. But when I saw my dear old man, my best friend, my father, whelmed under such a depth of affliction, all the sluices of

of my soul and inmost affections were laid open, and I broke into an avowed passion of tears and exclamations, till, like David in his strife of love with Jonathan, I exceeded. I accused myself of all the evils that had happened to his house; and I devoted the day to darkness and the night to desolation, wherein, by my presence and connections, I had brought those mischiefs upon him. The good man was greatly struck, and, I think, partly consoled by the excess of my sorrows; and all desolate as he was, he attempted to administer that comfort to me which he himself wanted more than any who had life.

Break not your heart, my Harry! Break not your heart, my child, he cried! Deprive me not of the only consolation that is left me! You are now my only trust, my only stay upon earth. A wretched merchant I am, whose whole wealth is cast away, save thee, thou precious casket, thou only remnant of all my possessions! My girl, indeed, was thy true lover, the tenderest of all mates! her love to thee, my son, was passing the love of woman! But, we have lost her, we have lost her, and wailing is all the portion that is left us below.

As soon as the family heard the voice of our mourning, they too gave a loose to the impatience of their griefs, and all the house was filled with the sound of lamentation.

On the following day I summoned the chief medical artists, and got the precious remains of my angel embalmed. She was laid under a sumptuous canopy with a silver coffin at her bed's foot, and every night when the house was at rest, I stole secretly from my bed and stretched myself beside her ! I pressed her cold lips to mine ! I clasped her corpse to my warm bosom, as though I expected to restore it to life by transfusing my soul into it ! I spoke to her, as when living ! I reminded her of the several tender and endearing passages of our loves ; and I reminded her also of the loss of our little ones, by whom we became essentially one, inseparably united in soul and body for ever.

There is surely, my cousin, a species of pleasure in grief ; a kind of soothing and deep delight that arises with the tears which are pushed from the fountain of God in the soul, from the charities and sensibilities of the human heart divine.

True,

True, true, my precious cousin, replied the Countess, giving a fresh loose to her tears; O Matilda, I would I were with thee! True, my cousin, I say, even now I sink, I die under the pleasure of your narration.

Upon the ninth night, continued Mr. Clinton, as I lay by the side of all that remained of my Matty, overtoiled and overwatched, I fell into a deep sleep. My mind notwithstanding, at the time, seemed more awake and more alive to objects than ever. In an instant she stood visible and confessed before me. I saw her clearer than at noon day, by the light which she cast with profusion abroad. Every feature and former trace seemed heightened into a lustre without a loss of the least similitude. She smiled ineffable sweetness and blessedness upon me. And, stooping down, I felt her embrace about my heart and about my spirit, while, at the same time, I saw her bent in complacency before me. After a length of extatic pleasure, which I felt from her communion and infusion into my soul; my Harry, says she, grieve not for me; all the delights that your world could sum up in an age would not amount to my bliss, no, not for an hour! It is a weight of enjoyment that, in an instant, would

would crush to nothing the whole frame of your mortality. Grieve not then for me, my Harry, but resign my beggarly spoils to their beggarly parent, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust! In my inordinate fondness for you, I have at length obtained a promise that my master and your master, my beloved and your lover, shall finally bear you triumphant through all the enemies that are set in fearful array against you. At these words my soul was overpowered with extacy, too mighty for mortality to bear! Every sense was suspended; and I sunk into a state of utter oblivion.

Toward the dawning I was awakened by the clapping of hands and the cries of lamentations. Starting up, I perceived Mr. Golding at the bedside, suspended over his Matty and me, and pouring forth his complaints.

There was a favourite domestic of his, a little old man, who had always kept a careful and inquisitive eye over every thing that was in or concerned our household. This Argus, it seems had suspected my nightly visits to the dead, and lurking in a corner, saw me open and enter the chamber where the corps was deposited. As he lay in his master's apartment, he took the first opportunity of his

74 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

being awake to impart what he thought a matter of extraordinary intelligence to him. Sir, says he, if I am not greatly deceived, my young master is this moment in bed with his dead lady. What is this you tell me? cried Mr. Golding, No, John, no, what you say is impossible. All who live, love that which is living alone; whatever favours of death, is detestable to all men. As I am here, replied John, I am almost assured that what I tell you is fact. Peace, peace, you old fool, said Mr. Golding, think you that our Harry is more loving than father Abraham, and yet Abraham desired to bury his dead out of his sight. I know not how that may be, said trusty John, but if you are able to stir, I will help you to go and see. I am sure the thought of it melts the very heart within me.

Accordingly, Mr. Golding, like old Jacob, strengthened himself and arose; and, pained as he was, he came, with the help of his John, to the place where I lay.

Having for some time looked upon me, as I slept with his Matty fast folded in my arms; he could no longer contain his emotions, but he and John broke forth into tears and exclamations. O, my children, my children, my dearest children,

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 75

dren, he cried, why did ye exalt me to such a pitch of blessedness? Was it only to cast me down into the deeper gulph of misery, a gulph that has neither bank nor bottom?

As I arose, all ashamed to be detected in that manner, the good man caught me in his arms. My Harry, my Harry, says he, what shall I pay you, my son, for your superabundant love to me, and to mine? Could my wretchedness give you blifs, I should almost think myself blessed in being wretched, my Harry!

I now prepared to execute the last command of my angel, and to consign to earth the little that was earthly in her. But when our domestics understood that all that was left of their loved Mistress was now going to be taken away from them for ever, they broke into tears anew, and set no bounds to their lamentations.

Her desolate father was desirous of attending the funeral, but, on my knees, I dissuaded him from it, as I was assured it would burst in twain the already over-stretched thread of his age and infirmities. He then insisted on having the lid of the coffin removed, and, bending over, he cast his whole body on the corse; again he rose and gazed upon it, and clapping his hands with a shout, Is this this my

76 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

world, he cried, the whole of my possessions? Are you the one that was once my prattling Matty?—The playfellow of my knees, the laughter away of care, who brought cheer to my heart and warmth to my bosom? Are you the one for whom alone I spent my nights in thought and my days in application? Is this all that is left then, of my length of labours? Oh! My spark of life is quenched! In thee, my Matty, my Matty, the flowing fountain of my existence is dried up for ever.

There is something exceedingly solemn and affecting, my cousin, in the circumstances and apparatus of our funerals; they are oppressive even to minds that are no way concerned or interested in the death of the party lamented. Though I grieved no more for my Matty! Though I was as assured of her bliss as I was of my own being; yet when the gloom of the procession was gathered round me; when I heard the wailings of the many families whom her charity had sustained; when I heard the bitter sobbings of the servants, whom her sweetness had so endearingly attached to her person; when all joined to bewail themselves, as lost in her loss; my heart died, as it were, within me, and I should have been suffocated on the spot

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 77

spot, had I not given instant way to the swell of my sorrows.

The tempest of the soul, Madam, like that of the elements, can endure but for a season. The passion of Mr. Golding, on the interment of every joy and of every hope that he could look for upon earth, within a few weeks subsided, or rather sunk into a solid but sullen peace, a kind of peace that seemed to say there is nothing in this universe that can disturb me.

Harry, said he, one evening, I have been thinking of the vision that I have had. Vision, Sir! said I, Has my Matty then appeared to you? Yes, he answered, she was the principal part of my vision for these twenty years past. The vision that I mean, my Harry, is the dream of a very long and laborious life. Here have I, by the toil of fifty years application, scraped together and accumulated as much as, in these times, would set kings at contention, and be accounted a worthy cause for spilling the blood of thousands; and yet what are these things to me, or of what value to themselves, more than the stones and rubbish that make our pavement before the door? I have been hungering and thirsting after the goods of this world, I have acquired

78 THE FOOL OF QUALITY,

all that it could give me, and now my soul, like a sick stomach, disgorges the whole, I then took one of his hands, and pressing it tenderly between mine, O my father! I cried, my dear, dear father! O, that I might be made sons and daughters, and every sort of kindred to you! All that I am and have should gladly be spent in bringing any kind of comfort to you, my father!

In about a fortnight after, as I entered his apartment one morning, to bid him good morrow, I observed that his countenance had much altered from what it was the evening before, that he looked deeply dejected and seemed to breathe with difficulty.

Are you not well, Sir? No, says he, my spirits are greatly oppressed. I find that I must leave you shortly; I believe that I must go suddenly, but where to? That is the question! The very terrible question; the only question of any importance in heaven or in earth! Sure, Sir! said I, that can be no question to you, whose whole life has been a continued course of righteousness, of daily worship to God, and good-will to all men? If you have any sins to account for, they must be covered tenfold by the multitude of your charities.

Talk

Talk not, Harry! said I, of the filthy rags of my own righteousness. I am far from the confidence of the boastful Pharisee! alas, I have not even that of the poor and humbled publican, for I dare not look up to say, *Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!* wherefore then do you speak of having finished my course toward God and toward man? It is but lately, very lately, that I set out upon it, and I am cut short before I have got within sight of the goal. Yes, Harry! I fear, I know, I feel that there is no salvation for me.

You amaze me, Sir! said I, you terrify me to death. If there is not salvation for such as you, what a depth of perdition opens for the rest of mankind!

I would you could convince me! He cried, I want to be comforted! I desire comfort, any kind of consolation. But I feel my condemnation within myself; moreover, I see every text of the gospel of words of life terribly marshalled, and set in broad array against me. What text, Sir? said I; I am sure I know of no texts that bring terror or condemnation to the just. Ah, Harry, he replied, justice is of the law and the circumcision, and has nothing to do with the new covenant or the new man. For what says

86 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

the great apostle? Circumcision availeth nothing, neither uncircumcision, but a new creature. For Christ himself had said; Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Again, the same apostle saith, I delight in the law of God after the inward man. And again, My little children of whom I travel in birth again until Christ be formed in you. Now, if all these corresponding expressions of being born again, a new creature, a new man, an inward man, Christ formed in us, &c. are to be glossed and explained away, as meaning little more than a state of moral sentiments and moral behaviour, there can be nothing of real import in the gospel of Christ.

Again, hear what the Redeemer saith; Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Again, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Again, Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple, &c.

If these things, I cried, are to be taken according to the apparent sense and import of the letter, neither the teachers of the gospel, nor those who are taught can be saved.

Therefore,

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 81

Therefore, replied he, it is said, that *Many be called, but few chosen.* And again, *Enter ye in at the straight gate, for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* O, my Harry, my Harry, our lives have been employed in seeking and loving the world and the things of the world, therefore the love of the Father could not be in us. O, that I had never been born! O thou God, whose tribunal, at this hour, is set up so tremendously against me; at length I feel the propriety of thy precepts, in rejecting the world and all that is therein! For what can they yield, save a little food and raiment to bodily corruption, or incitements to that pride which cast Lucifer into a gulph that now opens before me without a bottom?

As I trembled and had nothing to answer, I proposed to bring some of our clergy to him. No, Harry, no, says he, I will have none of their worldly comforts! I will not rest my soul on expectations as baseless as the bubbles which float in the air. Can they persuade me that I am one of the few who are chosen; can

82 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

they tell me wherein I have striven to enter at the strait gate, where many shall seek to enter but shall not be able?

Here he sunk into a fit of agonizing desperation, so that a cold dew broke forth from all parts of his body, and fell drop after drop, down his ghastly and fearful countenance. Never, Madam, never did I feel such horror as I then felt! I was affrighted and all frozen to my inmost soul. Haste, my dear Sir, exclaimed Lady Maitland, make haste through this part of your narration, I beseech you! I also feel for myself! I am terrified to the last degree.

At length, continued Mr. Clinton, I re-collected myself a little. My master, I cried, my father, my dearest father, since you will not take comfort in your own righteousness, take comfort in that of him who was made righteousness for you. Do you not now reject the world? Do you not now deny yourself? I do, I do, he said, I detest the one and the other. And do you not feel that you are wholly a compound of sin and of death? Ay, he cried, there is the weight, there is the mountain under which I sink for ever. Come then to Christ, my father, heavy laden as you are, and he will questionless, embrace you and be
rest

rest to you, my father ! I would come, Harry, he cried, but I dare not, I am not able. Strive, my father ; do but turn to him, and he will more than meet you. Cry out, with sinking Peter, *Save, Lord, or I perish!* and he will catch you with the hand of his ever ready salvation.

Here his countenance began to settle into an earnest composure ; and his eyes were turned and fixed upward ; while his old and enfeebled body continued to labour under the symptoms of near dissolution. At length he started, and seizing my hand with a dying pressure, there is comfort ! Harry, there is comfort ! he cried, and expired.

I WAS now cast, once more, upon a strange and friendless world. All the interests of my heart were buried with this family ; and I seemed to myself, as without kindred or connections in the midst of mankind. Your dear mama, indeed, sometimes called to condole with me, and water my losses with her tears ; and in her, and you, my cousin, young as you then were, was locked up and centered the whole stock that I had left of endearing sensations.

As the scenes of my former happiness served, daily and nightly, to render me more wretched by a sad recollection ; I determined

84 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

determined to quit my house and to take private lodgings. For this purpose I summoned Mr. Golding's domestics, and as he had made no will, I first paid them their wages, and then gave them such pretended legacies as brought their tears and their blessings in a shower upon me.

As soon as I had discharged all, except the two favourite servants of my master and my Matty, I desired that John our little old man, should be sent to me.

John, said I, as he entered, here is a bill for five hundred pounds, which our good old master has left you, in token of his acknowledgment of your true and loving services, and to help, with what you have saved, to soften and make easy the bed of death in your old age. Do you mean to part with me, Sir? said John, seemingly thankless and unconcerned about the gift which I had offered him; indeed, John, said I, in my present state of dejection, attendance of any kind would but be an encumbrance to me. Then, Sir, you may keep your bounty to yourself, for I shall break my heart before five and twenty hours are over. Nay, John, said I, I am far from turning you from me; stay with me as my friend and welcome, but not as my

I

servant,

servant, and I shall see the comfort of
 old times in always seeing you about me.
 Thank you, thank you, Sir, he cried, I
 will not disturb you with my tears; but
 I should die unblest, I should die un-
 blest, if I died out of your presence!
 so saying, he rushed from me in a fit of
 restrained passion,

I then sent for my wife's maid, whom
 I formerly mentioned. She had just heard
 of my discharging the other servants,
 and entered with a sad and alarmed coun-
 tenance. Come near, Mrs. Susan, I am
 going to part with you, said I, come to
 me and give me a farewell kiss. She ap-
 proached with downcast looks, when tak-
 ing her in my arms, I pressed and kissed
 her repeatedly, and scarcely withheld my
 tears. O my girl! My Matty's precious
 girl! I cried, I am not forgetful of your
 love, your honour, and disinterestedness
 toward us. Here, my Susy, your dar-
 ling mistress presents you with this bill
 of a thousand pounds. This, however,
 does not discharge me from my regard
 and attention to you; you are of a help-
 less sex, my Susy, that is subject to many
 impositions and calamities; wherefore,
 when this sum shall fail you, come to me
 again; come to me as to your friend, as
 to your debtor, Susy, and I will repeat
 my

86 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

my remembrance, and repeat it again, as you may happen to have occasion; for, while I have sixpence left, the favourite friend of my Matty shall not want her proportion.

Here the grateful and amazed creature threw herself on the floor. She cried aloud, while the family heard and echoed to her lamentations. She clasped my knees, she kissed my feet again and again. I could not disengage myself, I could not force her from me. O, my master! she cried, my all that is left of my adored, my angel mistress! Must I then be torn from you? must you live without the service of the hands and heart of your Susy? But I understand your regard and care for me, my master! it is a cruel and naughty world, and must be complied with.

Here I compelled her to rise, and, kissing her again, I turned hastily to the chamber, where my Matty's corps had been laid; and bolting the door, and casting myself on the bed, I broke into tears, and at length wept myself to sleep.

While I was preparing to leave the once loved mansion, I found in Mr. Golding's cabinet, a parchment that much surprised me. On my marriage he had proposed to make a settlement of his fortune

tune upon me, which, however, I obstinately refused to accept; whereupon, without my privity, he got this deed perfected, which contained an absolute conveyance to me of all his worldly effects and possessions; and this again renewed in me the tender and endearing remembrance of each of those kindnesses and benefits which he had formerly conferred upon me.

I now found myself in possession of near a million of money, which, however, in my disposition of mind at the time, appeared no worthier than so much lumber in a waste room. And I know not how it was that through the subsequent course of my life, although I was by no means of an economical turn, though I never sued for a debt, nor gave a denial to the wants of those who asked, nor turned away from him who desired to borrow of me, yet uncoveted wealth came pouring in upon me.

It was not without some sighs and a plentiful shower, that I departed from the seat of all my past enjoyments. I took lodgings within a few doors of your father; and my little household consisted of my favourite Irishman, my little old man, two footmen, and an elderly wo-

88 THE FOOL OF QUALITY

man who used daily to dress a plain dish of meat for us.

It was then, my fairest cousin, that your opening graces and early attractions drew me daily to your house; my heart was soothed and my griefs cheered by the sweetness of your prattle; and I was melted down and moulded anew, as it were, by the unaffected warmth and innocence of your caresses.

As I had no faith in dreams, not even in that of my Matty, I thought it impossible that I should ever marry again. I therefore resolved in my own mind, to make you my heir, and to endow you, in marriage, with the best part of my fortune.—But you are a little pale, Madam! You look dejected and fatigued. If you please I will suspend my narration for the present; and in the morning, if you choose it, as early as you will, I shall renew and proceed in my insignificant history.—Here he pressed her hand to his lips. She withdrew with a tearful eye and a heaving heart; and the next day he resumed his narration as followeth.

at all, not in the least. I long to be dissolved, and to be with our loving Lord. Indeed, John, said I, I am inclined to think you have been a very good liver. A wicked

man who used daily to direct a plain dish
 It was then, my fairest cousin, that
 your opening passages and your instructions
 drew me daily to your house; my heart

THOUGH you, my cousin, at that
 time, were a great consolation to
 me and a sweet lightner of my afflictions;
 yet the griefs of heart which I had suf-
 fered were not without their effect; at
 length they fell on my constitution, and
 affected my nerves or spirits. I think our
 doctors pretty much confound the one
 with the other. Accordingly I was ad-
 vised to travel for change of air and ex-
 ercise; and I was preparing for my jour-
 ney, when there happened in my family
 the most extraordinary instance of an
 ever watchful providence that occurs to
 my memory.

My little old man John began to de-
 cline apace, and at length took to his
 bed; and, having a tender friendship for
 him, I went to sit beside him, and to
 comfort him the best I could. John, said
 I, are you afraid to die? No, Sir, not
 at all, not in the least. I long to be
 dissolved, and to be with our loving Lord.
 Indeed, John, said I, I am inclined to
 think you have been a very good liver.
 A dog, Sir, a mere dog, desperately
 wicked

wicked, the vilest of sinners! I am a murderer too, my master, there is blood upon my head. Blood, said I, and started, Yes, Sir, replied John, but then the blood that was shed for me is stronger and more precious than the blood that was shed by me. Blood, however, John, is a very terrible thing; are you not afraid to appear before the judgment seat of Christ? By no means, my dear master! I have long since laid the burden of my sins before him, for I had nothing else to bring to him, nothing else to offer him, and he has accepted them and me, and my conscience is at rest in him. Then, John, there may yet be room for hope. There is assurance, my master, for I have laid hold upon the rock, and cannot be shaken.

But how do you intend to dispose of your worldly substance? All that I have, Sir, I got with you and my old master, and where I found it, even there I resolve to leave it. Indeed, John, I will not finger a penny of your money. How much may it amount to? Eight hundred and thirty seven pounds, Sir, or thereabout. And have you no relations of your own? Not one living that I know of. Then think of some one else, for
no

no part of it shall lie on my conscience, I assure you.

I have read somewhere or other, Sir, of a great king who was advised of God, in a dream, to take the very first man whom he should meet the next morning, to be his partner in the government. Now, if it pleases you, my master, I will follow the like counsel, and whosoever shall be first found before our door, let that person be the owner and inheritor of my substance! It shall be even as you say! I will go and see whom God shall be pleased to send to us.

Accordingly I went and opened our door, when a woman, who had nearly passed, turned about at the noise, and perceiving me, came up and said, a little charity, Sir, for the sake of him who had not where to lay his head!

I was strongly affected by the manner in which she addressed me, and, eyeing her attentively, I observed that she was clean, though meanly apparelled; wherefore, to make a further trial whether our adventure was likely to prove prosperous or not, I slipped a guinea into her hand, and desired her to go about her business. Accordingly, she courtied and went from me a few steps, when looking into her hand, she turned suddenly back; Sir,
Sir,

92 THE FOOD OF QUALITY.

Sir, says she, here, had like to have been a sad mistake! You meant to give me a shilling, and you have given me a whole guinea! It was, says I, a very great mistake indeed; but be pleased to come in, and we will try to rectify our errors.

Here, I took her into the chamber where John lay, and, having constrained her to sit down, I put my hand in my pocket. Here, good woman, said I! Here are ten guineas for you, to make you some amends for the mistake I was guilty of in giving you but one. The poor creature could scarcely credit her senses, but raising her eyes in extacy, and dropping from the chair upon her knees, she was proceeding to bless me; but I peremptorily insisted on her retaking her seat. Mistress, said I, be pleased to stay your prayers for the present; what I want from you is the story of your life; tell me who and what you are, without suppressing any circumstances, or concealing the faults of which you have been guilty, and I will make you the mistress of twenty guineas, that shall be added to what you have already received.

Sir, said she, you frighten me! My story is a very unhappy and a very foolish story, and cannot be of the smallest consequence to you. Sure you are too much of the gentleman to desire to ensnare me; and,

and, indeed, I know not of any thing whereby I may be ensnared. Wherefore, bountiful Sir, unto you, as unto Heaven, I will open my whole soul, without seeking to know why you look into the concerns of such a worm as I am.

I was the daughter of a farmer in Essex, my maiden name was Elenor Damer, I was married early in life, to a man who kept a chandler's shop in a little lane that led to Tower-Hill, his name was Barnaby Tirrell. Barnaby Tirrell? exclaimed John! Are you very sure that his name was Barnaby Tirrell? Peace, John, I cried, whatever you may know of this man, or of any other matter, I command you not to interrupt the woman till she has finished her story.—She then continued.

I had neither brother nor sister, Sir! but one brother, a twin brother, and we loved one another, as though there was nobody else in the world to be loved.

About three years before my marriage, my brother Tommy, then a sweet pretty lad, took to a seafaring life, and went from me, I knew not where, upon a voyage that I was told was a very great way off, and so I cried, day and night, as many tears after him as would have served me to swim in.

My

My

My husband was very fond of me, and when he used to see me cry, while I spoke of my Tommy, he would kiss me and try to comfort me, and say that he wished for nothing more than his return to Old England, that he might welcome him and love him as much as I did.

One night, on the ninth month of my marriage, as I sat moping and alone, my husband being abroad upon some business, I heard a knocking at the door, which was opened by our little servant girl. And then, before you could say this, in leaped my brother, and caught me fast in his dear arms.

I gave a great shout for joy, you may be sure: and pushing my Tommy from me, and pulling him to me again and again, we embraced, and cried, and kissed; and embraced and kissed again, as though we never could be tired.

In the mean while the door being open, my cruel Barnaby entered, unperceived by either of us; and seeing a strange man so fond and familiar with me, he opened a long hasped knife which he had in his pocket, and rushing up he gave my darling brother three stabs in the body, before he could speak a word or turn about to defend himself. Then, casting down the knife in a minute he
was

was out of the house, and I never saw him more.

For a time I stood like a stone, and then giving a great shriek, I fainted, and fell on my brother as he lay weltering in his blood.

Our little Mary, in the while, being frightened almost to death, ran about like a wild thing, and alarmed the street. Our neighbours crowded in, and sent for the next surgeon. My brother's wounds were probed and dressed, and he was laid in our bed.

Mean time, being forward with child, I fell into strong and untimely labour, and after very grievous travail, was delivered of a boy, who was christened and called James, after my dear and lately deceased father.

No pains of my own, however, kept me from enquiring after that dear and lamented brother who had been killed, as I suppose, for his love to me. But his youth and natural strength carried him through all dangers. In three months he was up and about as well as ever. And, in less than three more, he set out on another voyage, from whence he never, never, O never returned.

Before

Before he went abroad, my dear sweet fellow had left me a power to receive his wages. But, in five years after, I heard that he was cast away, or killed by the Barbary people; and, though I went and went again, in the middle of my wants, and in the middle of my sorrows, to ask and to petition for his pay, I never could get an answer of any profit or any comfort.

My little Jemmy, however, grew and prated apace, and was my only prop under all my afflictions. My husband, indeed, had left me in pretty circumstances, and had he but stayed with me, we should have prospered above our fellows. But what can a woman do, single, weak, and unprotected? I was imposed upon by some; by others I was refused payment for the goods that I had given, and at length I was reduced to poverty, and obliged to shut up shop.

Mean time I had spared no cost on the bringing up of my Jemmy. I had given him school learning, and he now was grown a very towardly and clever boy. And, having taken no messages, my sweet fellow every night used to bring to me whatever he had earned in the day-time.

In

In the loss of my husband and brother, in the loss of my Barnaby, and in the loss of my Tommy, to be sure I had grief upon grief; so that my health went from me, and next my strength, and I was not able to work, and go out a washing as before. But this did not signify much, while my child had his health; for he had now got a porter's place in the Custom-house, and, young as he was, he willingly carried heavy burdens to have the pleasure of bringing home his hard earnings to his mother. But about six weeks ago, may it please your honour, my dear boy fell ill of a quartan ague, as they call it, under which he, and his mother's heart still continue to labour.

As soon as she had ended her short narrative, well, John, said I, methinks this business will do; in my opinion you have got a very worthy inheritor of your fortune; what say you to it, John? First, Sir! let me ask her a question or two, if you please. Honest woman! draw your chair a little nearer to me, I pray you. And now tell me the truth; did you ever love your husband? Yes, dearly, indeed, very dearly did I love him; for he had loved me very dearly, till that miserable night. But when, as I thought,

98 THE FOOL OF QUALITY

he had killed my brother, I hated him as much as I had ever loved him before. But then again, when my Tommy had recovered of his wounds, I sent far and near to enquire after him and find him out; and when I could learn no tidings of him, I put it into all the printed papers that Thomas Damer was well recovered, and that Barnabas Tirrell, who had wounded him, might return without danger to his wife and infant.

And he is returned! shouted John: He is returned, my Nelly! Your barbarous and bloody husband, who stabbed your brother, and left you and your infant to famish, he is returned to you, my Nelly! and, in his death, he shall make you amends for all the sufferings which he brought upon you, during his lifetime. But, my master! my dearest master! send immediately for my child, my Jemmy, I beseech you, that, bad as I am myself, I may give him a father's blessing before I die!

I was surprized and affected, Madam, beyond expression, by incidents that were at once so wonderful and so tender; and I directly sent servants and a sedan chair for James, with orders to have him carefully and warmly wrapt up; for what his mother told me of him had already
given

given me a very strong prejudice in his favour.

Mean while the poor woman had sunk on her knees by her husband's bed-side, and was plentifully pouring forth her tears upon him; partly for joy of having found him, and partly for grief of having found him in that condition.

O, my Nelly! my Nelly! cried Barnabas, had I known who the person was whose blood I drew that terrible night, I would sooner have thrust my knife into my own heart, than into any part of the body of that dear brother of yours. But I was old and ugly you know; and you were young and handsome; and jealousy is a mad devil that rages in the breast like hell-fire; it never knew how to spare, but tears and consumes every thing that comes within it's reach.

At length James was brought to us, and as we were in his father's apartment, a chamber no way adorned, James entered without any respect to persons. He was a tall and comely youth, but very pale and lean, and, as it was one of his well days, he walked in without help. He had barely been told that his mother sent for him in a hurry, so that he entered with a visible alarm in his countenance.

What is the matter my dear mother? says he; alas, I am little able to help you at present. I hope nothing has happened that is suddenly distressful. Nothing amiss, my child! more than that your dear father, for whom I have fought and been fighting this many a Year, lies dangerously ill in this very bed, my Jemmy! Am I then so blessed, cried the boy, as to see and embrace a father? O, my child! exclaimed the old man, and eagerly stretched his arms toward him, come to my bosom, thou only offspring of my life! I may now say, with blessed Jacob, let me die, let me die, since I have seen thy face, and thou art alive, my son!

I would at any time give a thousand pounds, my cousin! for a tenth of the enjoyment that I then had, in the feelings which God poured into the hearts of this little family, on their so very unexpected and marvellous a meeting. It appeared to me, however, that young James even exceeded his parents in love; and this gave me such a cordial attachment to him, that from that hour to this we have never been sundered. He never failed nor forsook me; and, at this very day, he is my respected friend, and the superintendant of my family.

John,

John, otherwise Barnabas, continued to linger, for about a fortnight longer, and then departed quite happy, and without a groan. During the same space also, James was daily attended by my own physician, and was nearly re-established in his health.

Being then intent on my departure, I sent for the widow. Mrs. Tirrell says I, I should be much inclined to take your James along with me, if I did not think you would grieve over much in his absence. No, no, Sir! said she, I would to heaven I were myself a young man for your sake. I desire no better either of him or for him, than that he should live and die faithfully and lovingly in your service.

The next day I went down the Thames in a barge, partly for recreation, and partly to speak to the captain of the vessel in which I proposed to embark. As I drew near to the Custom-house wharf, I observed a wherry, crowded with men whom she was about to land at the stairs; and, on enquiry, I was informed that they were slaves, whom our consul at Algiers, by his intercession or bounty, had ransomed and sent home.

Immediately compassion rose powerfully in my bosom. Alas! said I to myself,

self, I see that I am not without companions in affliction. I, indeed, have now, neither wife nor children, nor father nor mother, nor brother, as I may say, nor sister, nor any connection with the world in which I live. I am shut out, as it were, from every enjoyment upon earth. Let me not however be envious, let me rather wish, and give, and dispense enjoyment to others; since, to give joy to others is all the joy, in this world, that is left to myself.

Here I ordered my people to land, and coming up to the late captives, my friends! said I, you are welcome once more to Old England! I am fond of hearing adventures; you also may have got your appetites; and if you will favour me with your company, I will order a dinner for us at yonder tavern.

I need not tell you, Madam, that the parties were soon agreed. While a plentiful dinner was providing. I met Alderman Bicker, a city magistrate and an old acquaintance of mine. Sir Thomas! said I, I insist on your dining with me to day, at the Phoenix there. Perhaps your companions will not appear to you of the most honourable sort. They are, however, good gospel guests, Sir Thomas! and consist of the halt, the lame, the

the maimed, and the beggar. In short, I have invited all yonder ragged regiment, being about five and thirty slaves from Barbary to dinner; and, after I have filled their bellies, I intend to give them a hundred pounds *per* man, to help them to begin the world again, and to keep them from being an incumbrance on their country.

Five and thirty hundred pounds! exclaimed Sir Thomas Bicker, five and thirty hundred times twenty shillings of English sterling money! It is well for you, Harry Clinton! that old Golding was born before you; but nothing can hold you long at this rate. To whom again do you propose to give this unmeasurable bounty? to the excrements of the public, to nuisances and offences against society, to wretches whom England has spewed forth from a sick and debauched stomach. But I suppose you expect to purchase extraordinary glories in heaven, as the reward of these very extraordinary charities on earth. No, indeed, Sir Thomas! said I, I shall never crave nor look for any thing, at the hands of the son of David, save only mercy from him, and justification in him. However, my good friend, if you will indulge me with your company, you yourself shall be judge of the merit of the parties

parties, and I will wholly be guided by your advice. Then, says he, do you saunter here a few minutes; while, in order to open the Hearts of your guests, I go and give them a priming before dinner.

As soon as Sir Thomas had executed his purpose, he came forth, and beckoning me to him, put his mouth to my ear. Do not be offended, says he, at some free expressions that I may happen to let loose, in order to encourage these fellows to the like liberty, and shew you what metal your companions are made of.

Dinner was now served up on a range of joined tables, and Sir Thomas, with an easy and chearful familiarity, desired that they would seat themselves without ceremony. This many of them did with a freedom not far from impudence, while others drew back abashed, and begged permission to stand.

At the head of the first sort was seated a fellow whose first sight gave my nerves a thrill of horror. His countenance was of that cast in which any one would place an implicit confidence who wanted an associate for any dark, traitorous, or bloody purpose.

When

When the cloth was removed, my friend pushed the bottles about very jovially, and began to talk as an utter latitudinarian in morals, whereby he gained the confidence of every rogue in company.

As soon as most of them were well warmed, for some drank but sparingly, Sir Thomas took out his purse, and tossing, a guinea to each of them, now, my brave friends, says he, if you desire any more favours, you must tell me openly and honestly the jolly use you intend to make of your money to night. Why, master, answered the ill looking villain, as for me and my six companions here, we have had a long lent, and a wench is the word! That's gallantly spoken, cried out Sir Thomas, here are three guineas more apiece, for you seven. And now, my brave friends, I shall not be backward of another bounty, if you will give me a short history of your adventures.

That is soon done, my master, answered the spokesman. We seven were taken prisoners by an Algerine Corsair, after an engagement in which seven and twenty more of us lay in blood upon deck. We were sold to one Pedro Paolo, a renegade, who, having been of all religions in Christendom, had at length turned Turk. We

were used very severely, and, after sweating all day were made to sweat blood at night with the stripes which they gave us. However, we were hardy dogs, and did not matter this very much; when one of their priests came privately to us, and promised that, if we would forsake Christ, and turn to Mahomet, he would ensure us liberty and riches here, and paradise hereafter. These, Sir, as you well know, were very tempting things. But, as soon as our master understood that we had complied with the terms; he hurried us, by night, into one of his Gallies, where we were chained to the Oar, our ears were lopped as you see, and, at every meal of bread and water, we received ten lashes. At length his honour the ambassador, I forget how they call him, found us out and redeemed us, and so you see us here.

Pray, my friend, said Sir Thomas, are there any more in this company whom you could recommend to me, as being of the same gallantry of spirit with yourself? Yes, said he, there are the two Johns, and the two Andrews yonder, who are none of the St. Johns or Saint Andrews, I promise you. But yonder sits our Saint Thomas, a canting son of a bitch; he wanted, truly, to preach to us, during
our

our voyage; and, in the last storm, he would have persuaded us, forsooth, to join with him in Prayer. Here then, cried Sir Thomas, you two no Saint Johns, and you two no Saint Andrews, here are three pieces a man for you also; and that money, I hope, gentlemen, will be sufficient to maintain you in gaol, till we can hear a better account of you. Ho, drawer! are the people I sent for in waiting? They are, please your honour. Desire them to step in.

Here entered a constable with a great posse of his people. Constable, said Sir Thomas, take these seven and these four into your custody, and keep them in close durance till you hear further from me; I would rather open the tower cages, and let all the wild beasts abroad through the streets, than loose such reprobates as these among mankind.

At this instant, as a constable was laying hold on our gallant spokesman, he suddenly drew an instrument that was half knife and half dagger, and leaping across me, he caught Sir Thomas by the throat, and raising his arm, would have plunged the steel into his bosom; but, at the same moment, I seized his hand, and throwing up his heels, I cast him on his back,

back, and wrenched the weapon from him.

As soon as we were thus rid of eleven of our guests, a young man came earnestly up to us: Gentlemen, says he, till those seven hell-hounds were secured, I did not dare to open my mouth. I know them all right well, and, had they known me, there is not one of them but would have thrust his knife into my heart.

About eleven years ago, I was taken as cabin boy, when they, with many more, were taken as sailors on board the good ship St. Catharine, Mr. William Tomson, master, bound for the West Indies. As soon as we came along side the Canaries, this big villain, Patrick Mc. Douel, prevailed on most of the crew to enter into a conspiracy, whereupon they barbarously and sportingly murdered the master, the officers, and all who were not of their own gang, except myself, being then about ten years of age. But they did not prosper long, for the very next morning, we were held in chase, and then they wished for the help of those hands whom they had cut off. So, as Mc. Douel told you, after a very bloody battle, we were boarded and taken, and those seven confederates were sold to one master; and, well as it happened for me, I was sold to another;

ther; and all this and more, I am ready to witness in any court, provided I am kept safe from the clutches of those devils.

Ay, exclaimed, Sir Thomas, these are your charities, Mr. Clinton; and such the objects of whom your judgment has made choice. Ah, my friend, I replied, that charity must be very tardy, which waits to be assured of the merit of it's object. Christ himself cured ten lepers, while he knew that nine of them were unworthy of his graciousness.

On the entrance of the constables, I had cast my eye round the room, and remarked that most of our mess-mates seemed much alarmed, and turned pale on the caption of their late comrades, which rendered their characters, also somewhat suspected to me. Wherefore, lest I should cast my seed on a wholly barren soil, I wished to get some further intelligence concerning them. Where, said I, is the person whom they call St. Thomas? I desire a few words with him.

Here a man approached, respectfully, from the farther end of the table, to which, through modesty, he had retreated with his few companions. Mr. Thomas, said I, looking earnestly at him, have I not seen your face before? No, please your honour, I think that must be impossible.

It

1110. THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

It is now upon eighteen years since I set a foot in this kingdom, and your honour, must then have been but a child. Do you know any thing, Mr. Thomas, of these people or their affairs? Nothing of their affairs, Sir, and little more of their persons, than that they are, all, men of very profane lips; except the lad who spoke to you last, and my five mess-mates yonder, the only people who, during our long and dangerous voyage, would return thanks to God for any of his mercies, or pray him to avert his just judgments from them.

Then, said I, we will proceed between extremes. On the one side we will not minister fuel to the lusts of those unhappy creatures: Neither will we leave them to perish; or tempt them, through want, to robbery, on the other side. Here, landlady, take this bill. Give twenty pounds to each of these seventeen fellows, and, if any of them, within a month, shall bring you a certificate of his good behaviour, give him twenty pounds more. Now, Sir Thomas, I may hope, that I do not exceed your good pleasure. Not much, Harry, not much! In time you may be tractable.

Here the poor wretches looked amazed, and scarce crediting the reality of the bounty

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 111

bounty that was ordered for them, they cried, thank your honours, thank your honours! and withdrew. One of them, however, seemed to linger after the rest, and, going out last, he returned again quickly, and threw himself at my feet. I am a reprobate, Sir, a mere reprobate, he cried, and am not worthy of your charity. Does your conscience condemn you then, said I? It does, Sir, it does. Then I condemn you not; rise, rise, and give me your hand, my brother!

Mr. Clinton, said Sir Thomas, now that I have kept you from casting so much money on the quicksands, you can afford to be the more generous to these worthy fellows. You will allow me then, said I, to order our landlady to pay them a hundred pounds a piece. With all my heart, says he, and if you will be so honest as to reimburse me the sixty or seventy pieces, which I threw away, for your use, upon the other villains, I will add something to that, also, and divide it among them.

Then, Sir Thomas, if you will indulge me with your company for an hour or two longer, let us send for a salesman to put our friends here in decent apparel; while we listen to what they shall be pleased to tell us of their fortunes. Agreed,

Harry,

112 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Harry, agreed. So, let us resume our seats, and have the other bottle.

Master Thomas said I, pray what may be your surname? Damer, Sir. Damer, Damer! have you any relations in this kingdom? Alas, Sir, I fear not; my father, James Damer of Essex, died a little before I set out on my last voyage. And had you no relation beside? O, Sir, that is it, which brought the tears so suddenly into my eyes! I had a sister, an only sister, a sister that I loved dearer than health or safety. But — I fear — I fear — here his speech was stopped by his emotion; while I was ready to leap up and catch him in my arms; but I suppressed my inclinations, for the present, that I might heighten the surprize and pleasure which I foresaw there would be at the meeting of the twins.

While things were providing for the cloathing and accommodation of our guests; they successively, gave us an abstract of their respective lives and histories, wherein were many incidents, extremely interesting and entertaining. Let us have them, let us have them, by all means! cried lady Maitland. My dear Madam, said Mr. Clinton, were I to relate to you the several affecting stories that occurred to me, throughout my travels,

from

from prisons, from the depth of dungeons, from captives, and from persons redeemed from captivity; from wretches wrecked at sea, or wrecked by fortune; from those who survived the calamities of warfare and famine, I should never make an end.

But then, said the countess, the poor creature who felt so sudden and affecting a compunction, I have a friendship for that fellow, and I am deeply interested in all the concerns of my friend, I must tell you. Well, Madam, you shall have his story, then, as nearly as I can recollect at this distance of time.



CHAP. XVI.

The HISTORY of a REPROBATE.

I KNOW not, gentlemen, said he, who my parents were. I was found, when an infant wrapped in rags on a cobbler's bulk, in Westminster. The parish officers sent me to the poor-house; and when I was capable of instruction, they sent me to the charity-school.

When I had learned to read and write, I was bound, for a servant, to Mr. Skinner, a neigh-

114 THE FOOD OF QUALITY:

a neighbouring attorney. My mistress grew fond of me; she was a very holy woman; she taught me my prayers and catechism, and made me read to her every night, and repeat chapters and psalms, till I had nearly got half the bible by rote.

As my master used to send me on many errands and messages, and to entrust me with little matters of money on such occasions, on finding me always punctual and honest to him, he began to love me almost as much as my good mistress did.

But now came on my first falling away from all goodness. I was about twelve years old, when, in a cursed hour, my master sent me to a distant part of the town, with a bill to pay some money, and to bring him back the change. The change amounted to about four pounds in glittering silver. It appeared a mint of money. I had never been in possession of so large a heap; and I sighed, and said to myself, how blessed must they be who are become the rich owners of so much money. Then, some one seemed to whisper me that I was the owner; and again some one seemed to whisper me that I was not the owner. Then I would go forward toward my master; and again I would stop and go aside. Then, I would thrust

thrust my hand into my pocket, and feel the greatness of my treasure, then turn to the wall, and lay the brightness of it before my eyes. Then I would run a piece off, as hurried away by the force of the temptation; and again, I would delay, and stop, and turn, and strive to force myself homeward. Till, what with doubting and delaying, and struggling off and on, and going backward and forward, I considered that if I went home, I should now get nothing but blame and beating, and so I took a head, and ran into the country as fast as my feet could carry me.

As I ran myself out of breath, from time to time, I would look back and look back, and run on and run on, in the thought that my master, or some one from him, was at my heels. But often since, I have reflected and was persuaded in my mind, that my kind master and mistress had not the least suspicion of me, but rather enquired and sorrowed after me, as being murdered or kidnapped from them, and this also was, at times, a great grief of heart to me.

When I was quite tired and jaded, and night came on, I turned up to a sorry kind of an inn, or rather ale-house, which I happened to be near. But, as I feared
every

116 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

every thing, I had the cunning to conceal my treasure, and taking a penny from my pocket, I begged the woman of the house, for that and charity's sake, to give me a little bread and milk, and some hole to lie in.

Having finished my supper, I was shewn to a kind of hovel under the stairs, where throwing myself on some straw, with a piece of a blanket over me, I fell fast as a rock. Awakeing, however, about midnight, or somewhat after, and seeing all dark about me, and no creature, near hand; I began to tremble greatly; and then I wished to say my prayers, but I did not dare to pray; and so I lay sweating and trembling, and trembling and sweating till the dawning of the day brought some relief to my spirits.

Having breakfasted at the cost of a second penny, I set out, though not with my former speed; for, reflecting that I had not my livery on, but a small frock coat, I was under the less fear of being known. However, I pushed on as well as I was able, wanting still to get as far from danger as possible. And indeed, I hoped by going on still further and further to get away from my own fears and from my own conscience. O gen-

O gentlemen! what misery did I not endure, at that season & the trust I had in my treasure began now to abate, the dread of losing it also brought new troubles upon me; peace was banished from within me; and without there was no place whereto I might fly for rest.

On the fifth morning of my travels, having expended what halfpence and small silver I had; I took out half a crown, and offered it to the man of the house, desiring him to return what was over the reckoning. As he took it, he gave me a look that I thought went through me, and continuing to stare me in the face, he shamed me so, that I was constrained to turn aside. He gave me the change, however, and I set forward on my journey, all trembling and apprehending I knew not what.

I had not gone above a mile, when, meeting a dirty road, I turned over a stile that led to a path through the fields. Here I walked on a little way, when, turning, I saw my landlord making long strides after me, whereupon my heart beat, and my knees grew so weak under me that I stood as still as a stone.

He came quickly up with me, and, seizing me by the neck, he cast me on my back. Ha! you young rogue, says he

118 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

he, let us see what money you have got. Then, diving into my pockets, he pulled out the whole stock in which I trusted for happiness. O, you little dog of a villain, from whom have you stolen all this treasure? but, I must go and return it to the right owner. O, good Sir, good Sir, I roared out, will you not leave me a little? ever so little, dear Sir, to keep me from starving? But he was deaf to my cries and prayers, and away he went.

Hope, the last comfort of the miserable, now forsook me. I cursed, at my heart, the day in which I was born; and I lay a long time, as one who had no use for limbs, nor any further way to travel upon earth. At length I broke out into shouts and a great gush of tears, and having got some ease by venting my sorrows, I rose by a kind of instinct, and went on I knew not whither,

Growing hungry after noon, I would willingly have begged the charity of passengers, but this I did not dare to do, for fear they should ask me whence I came, and who I was, and whereto I was going, questions to which I could give no very honest answer. So, I bore my hunger as well as I could, till coming at night to a hovel where a farmer kept his pigs, I made

I made way for myself among them, and slept in the straw till morning.

The day following, as I passed slowly and half famished through a small village, my eye caught at a penny loaf that lay on a little shop window which jutted into the street. I looked here and there, and peered into the shop, and was just going to seize the ready and tempting spoil; when something whispered at my heart, do not touch it for your life, starve, starve, rather than offer to steal any more, and so I tore myself away, and running as fast as I could, for fear of turning back, I at last got clear off from the reach of this temptation.

When I had travelled something farther, I got into an enclosed country, where there were hedges on every side, with plenty of haws and bramble berries on every bush. And here I filled my belly with berries to serve me for dinner; and I stuffed my pockets with haws against I should want. Upon this I grew wonderful glad that I had not taken the loaf; and peace again began to come upon my mind; and, about night-fall, having reached a copse on one side of the road, I crept, like a hare, under the shelter of the bushes; I then supped upon my haws, after which I kneeled down and half ventured

tured at a prayer to God, and gathering up in my form, I slept happily till morning.

Having lived thus for some days, I came in an open country, where there was scarce any path, nor any haw or berry within many a mile. I now began to grow sick and faint with hunger; and again my sickness went off, and I became so greedy and ravenous that I was ready to eat my own flesh from the bones. Soon after, I spied at a distance, a confused heap of something at the root of a great tree that grew in the open fields. I made up to it in expectation of I knew not what, and found an old beggerman fast asleep in his patched cloak, with a bundle of somewhat lying beside him.

Instantly I opened his little baggage, when, to my inexpressible transport, a large luncheon of brown bread, with some halfpence, struck my eyes. I did not hesitate a moment about seizing the bread, for I could no more withstand the cravings of my appetite, at the time, than I could withstand a torrent rushing down a hill. Having appeased my stomach, I began to demur about what I should do with the remainder of the bread, and felt a motion or two inclin-
ing

ing me to leave it behind me. But, "no, said I to myself, this is all the bread that I have, or may ever have during life, and I know not where to get a bit in the whole world; beside, I do this man no harm in taking it away, since I leave him money enough wherewith to buy more." So I put the bread in my pocket, and went on my way, leaving behind me about four or five pence in the wrapper.

I had not gone far, however, before I said to myself again, "This man is a beggar by trade, and gets halfpence from every passenger that goes the road. But alas, no one living has any pity upon me, and so, to starve alive, or take the money, is all the question." So saying or so thinking, I went back on tiptoes, and stooping and seizing my prey, I flew away like lightning.

As soon as I had got out of the reach and sight of the poor man, the first motion I felt was the joy of having such a prize; but I had not gone far till this joy was much abated, my sighs began to heave, and my tears to flow apace.

That night, I took up my lodging in a waste hut that lay a little way off the road. But though, as I thought, I had plenty of bread and money enough

about me, yet I found myself exceeding heavy, and I was not able to pray, as I did the foregoing nights.

During all this time, I neither knew where I was, nor whereto I was going, nor any thing more of my travels than that I came from London. When I had spent to my last penny, and was walking slow and melancholy, on a by-path that led through some woody lawns, I heard the voice of merriment, and, quickly after, perceived a group of Gipsies that came from behind some trees.

As I saw that I could not escape them I gathered courage and went forward, when, coming up, they stopped and eyed me with much attention, and made a ring about me. Where are you going, my child, says a man with a broad girdle and a very formidable beard? Indeed, Sir, said I, I cannot tell. And where did you come from then? From London, Sir, so please you. From London, child? why that is a very great way off. And pray what made you leave London? To get away from my master. But, I hope you did not come away empty, you brought something from him, did not you? Some little matter, good Sir, but I was robbed of it on the way. Hereupon, this venerable regent smiled and, turning to his dependents,

dependents, as far as I see, said he, this chap will answer our purposes to a hair.

Here one of the females asked if I was hungry, and, on my answer in the affirmative, they all invited me with a jovial air to dinner. We then turned a distance off from the path wherein we had met, and gradually descended into one of the pleasanter spots in the world. It was a dell surrounded with hills, some of which were slanting, some headlong and impending, and all covered or spotted with groups of trees, of different heights, sorts, and colours; through which there descended a gurgling rivulet, which having rolled over stones and pebbles, grew silent in a small lake, that reflected the circling objects from the hills around.

Immediately nature's carpet was covered with a large cloth of fine damasked linen. The baggage was taken from the shoulders of the bearers; and, before I well could observe what they were about, there was spread, as by art magic, before my eyes, the most various and sumptuous banquet I had ever beheld. Down, instantly sunk the guests; some sitting like the Turks, cross-legged; while others lolled, like the Romans, beside each other.

As they had travelled for that day, they all eat in silence; and, in a short space, the burden of the luggage-carriers was pretty much lightened. In the mean time, some arose, and unladed two asses of the creels which they carried. The cloth then was quickly emptied of the cold fowls and baked meats, with the loins of beef and mutton; and leather jacks, that contained plenty of the best wines and other liquors were set before us. These, again, were decanted into clean japanned pitchers; and a japanned cup, of equal measure, was given into every hand.

Then began mirth and jollity to flow round with the cups; never did I see so pleasant, so gleeful a company. Joke and banter, without offence, were bandied from every side; and bursts of laughter were echoed from the answering hills.

As soon as I was warmed and my heart opened by what I drank, they all expressed a liking and kindness for me, and requested that I would tell them my story, without disguise. Accordingly I made an ingenuous confession of all the matters related. But, instead of meeting those reproofs which I expected for my wickedness, they jointly began to ridicule my scruples, and put to shame the little shame that I had of my evil deeds.

My

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 125

My child, said their ancient governors when you have been a sufficient time with us, you will then learn what it is to be wise and to be happy. You will then know that religion is nothing but hypocrisy or fashion. There are thousands and ten thousands of religions upon earth, all contrary, and fighting the one against the other. People pretend to fear God, when it is the fear of the laws, alone, that is before their eyes. God is not to be feared but to be loved, my son, for he is a very gracious and a bountiful God. He gave the heavens, in common, to the birds of the air. He gave the seas, and rivers also, in common to the fishes. And he gave this whole earth in common to mankind. But great people and people of power have seized it all to themselves, and they have made to themselves possessions and properties by fences and enclosures; and they have again enclosed those enclosures, by laws of their own making, whereby the poor are to be punished when they attempt to reclaim any part of the natural rights with which God had gifted them. But when the poor, without fear of the laws, can gain any thing from the rich and the mighty, who have robbed them of their rights, they may surely do it with a safe and

126 THE FOOL OF QUALITY,

an honest conscience. And now know, my child, that you are come among those who, of all people, can best defend you and make you happy. We are of that sort of the poor who are above the rich and the mighty, by being above the laws; for they can frame no laws which are of any more force to us than the web of a spider.

So spoke this formidable sage, and indeed, gentlemen, however strange it may seem, I saw the latter part of his assertion fully verified by practice. I continued among this very singular and wonderful people, near the space of three years; during which time they initiated me into all the arts and mysteries of their manifold iniquities. No fetters could hold them; no prisons could contain them; no bolts or locks could secure the treasure of the wealthy from them. By the means of spells or certain odours, as it were by enchantment, all beasts became subject to them; the wildest horse would stand for them; the fiercest mastiffs did not dare to bay or growl at them; so that all bleaching grounds, yards, and gardens were as open to their invasion as the highway. They assumed all shapes, and almost all sizes. They became visible and invisible, known or unknown at pleasure;

for every different dress they had a different countenance and set of features ; so that their daily intimates could not know them, except by appointed words or tokens. And thus, without violence or apparent fraud, without bustle, indictment, or accusation on any side, they over-ruled the government, and held, as it were, the purses of the whole nation in their hands.

You will wonder gentlemen, by what policy these people could maintain their influence and depredations, undetected, throughout the kingdom. I will account for this matter as clearly and as briefly as I can.

Though they never appeared, by day, except single or in small parties of ten or fifteen at most, yet they kept their state entire, by quick and constant intelligence. Beside, their prince or principal potentate, who was the person that first accosted me, they had a deputy governor for every shire ; and at convenient distances, houses of common resort for the fraternity. Here their victuals were dressed and their provisions laid in ; and here also were deposited the spoils of the public, which, when converted into money, was locked in a strong box, one tenth for the use of the society on any emergency,

gence, and the other nine for the benefit of the spoilers, in proportion to their respective ranks and merits.

Before we rose from our late mentioned festival, an ancient female fortune-teller chucked me under the chin and said, do you know, my dear, where this same kind landlord lives who robbed you of your money? All I know, said I, is that he lives in a little town at the sign of a white cross, and near to a great windmill. What, cried one of the men, my old host Jerry Gruff? He hates that any, except himself, should prosper by their ingenuity. I owe that fellow a fling, cried another, for once attempting to circumvent me in his own house. Well, my lad, says Geoffry the old governor, his house lies directly in the way of our circuit, and, for your encouragement, I promise you that he shall refund you every penny of the money he took from you.

The luggage being now up, we went back on the field path by which I came, and coming to a great road, we divided into small parties, who were appointed to meet at the rendezvous, where we supped merrily and slept soundly for that night.

We set out, the next morning by dawn of day, and entering soon after upon a common, we saw a parcel of horses feeding

feeding without a keeper. Immediately three of the likeliest were taken from the rest. Out came scissars and other implements, with phials of colouring essences, and to work went many hands, when, in less than five minutes, had the owners come up, they could not have found a single mark of their own property upon them. And indeed, I have frequently known some of those, my ingenious brotherhood, so very audacious as to sell, in public market, the cattle, which they had stolen, to the very persons from whom they were taken.

As these people were never unprovided of their conveniencies, the horses were quickly bridled and dispatched, by several emissaries, several ways to summon the neighbouring brotherhood, on the third night, to meet near the white cross with their appointed apparatus.

Accordingly, on the evening of the night required, we arrived on a little hill that stood opposite to the house of my conscientious landlord; and, soon after we were joined by several parties, from several sides, amounting to about a hundred and twenty persons, with parcels of I knew not what upon asses, &c.

The packs were quickly opened, and from thence were produced black and

130 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

flame coloured gowns, flambeaux, hoofs, and horns, and vizards of horrid aspect and terrific dimension. In a hurry, we were all fitted with our respective dresses and characters. A large pasteboard coffin was covered with a white sheet, and exalted upon the shoulders of four fiery devils; and, as night began to fall dark and heavy upon us, a light was struck, the flams were lighted, one was put into every right hand; speaking trumpets, with other instruments of heart-sinking sounds, were put to many a mouth, and we directly set out on our diabolical procession. Some roared like bulls, others howled and bayed like dogs at a midnight moon, while others yelled articulately in the catterwawling gibberish; in short, the sounds made such a complication of horrors as no mortal ears could abide, nor mortal courage support.

Mean while the town took the alarm and began to be in commotion. Old and young quitted their houses, and hurried hither and thither through the street. But, as we advanced, they made backward, and running, or climbing, or scrambling up the hill, they gathered all in a body before the windmill. In the interim, we pushed forward, and entered the inn, where neither cat nor dog, nor living creature

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 131

creature was left, save goodman Gruff, who lay impotent of the gout, in an upper chamber.

While most of the company staid routing and searching the house below, Signior Geoffry led a few of us up stairs. He represented the person of Lucifer, whose name was impressed in flaming characters on his cap. On entering the room where landlord Gruff lay, hark ye, Jerry, says Lucifer, you sneaking thief, you mean petty-larceny villain! how came you to rob a child, the other day, of the money which he gained under my influence and encouragement? I have a mind, you scoundrel, to strike you out of my list of innkeepers. O my good Lord Lucifer, cries Gruff, with a trembling voice, in my conscience, now, I did not think that any kind of robbery would be an offence to your honour. You lie, you rascal, you lie, cries Lucifer, the devil is a gentleman, he loves those who rob the great, who have robbed the little; but he hates your low-spirited scoundrels, who rob the widow, and the fatherless, and take from the little ones the little that they have. Why, pray, my lord Lucifer, are you a christian, cries Gruff? A better one, rascal, than you or any of your tribe; for, though I tremble, yet I believe.

And

132 THE FOOL OF QUALITY

And I tell thee, Jerry, that I will make this generation to tremble; but, as I think, the devil himself can not bring them to believe.

During this confabulation the whole house, drawers, and all, was gutted as clean as a fowl for supper. I So, without entering into any other habitation, away we marched as in our former tremendous procession; till, coming to some standing water, we halted, and at a given word, we altogether plunged our torches in the pool, and instant night fell upon all the world.

Thus, from day to day, and year to year, while I continued with this people, I was witness to a variety of flights, deceits, impostures, metamorphoses, and depredations, without any instance of their being brought to condign punishment. One of them, however, within my time, was detected, taken, imprisoned, brought to the bar, tried, and brought in guilty; and yet found means to evade justice by the most marvellous piece of stratagem that ever was.

He was spied in the act of stealing a bay horse. Fresh suit was made. He was seized and loaded with irons in the dungeon of the county goal. On the day of trial the fact was proved by in-
contestable

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 133

contestable witnesses; and the jury, without quitting the box, pronounced the fatal word *guilty*. Have you any thing to say, cried the judge, why sentence of death should not be pronounced against you? I can truly affirm, exclaimed the culprit, that I am as clear as the light of this matter; that the beast which I took, then was, and, to this hour, is my own property; and that there must be some wonderful mistake in this business; wherefore, my Lord, as I am upon life and death, I trust that your charitable indulgence will order this same horse to be brought into court. The horse accordingly was brought, and the culprit continued, now, my Lord, be pleased to order the witnesses to say whether this be the same horse that I stole or not? The same, the same, cried the witnesses, by virtue of our oaths. Be so good then, my Lord, to ask them of what age this horse was, at the time that I stole him? By virtue of the same oath, four years old, rising five. Now, my Lord, if you would continue your gracious indulgence, be pleased to order his mouth to be examined by some people skilled in such matters. This also was done by two or three jockeys of acknowledged judgment, who instantly cried out, why, my Lord,

Lord, this horse is quite passed mark of mouth.

Hereupon every person that was present looked astonished, and silence was in court for some minutes; till the culprit resumed. There is but one request more with which I shall trouble your Lordship; it is, that you would be pleased to send and examine whether this same horse be a horse or mare. This lastly was done, when the examiners cried out, a mare, my Lord, a mare, without any question!

Here the surprize and amazement of the court was redoubled. The jury looked down abashed; the witnesses slunk away in utter shame and confusion; and his Lordship instantly ordered that the prisoner should be dismissed without fees, and that the mare should be restored to him as his proper goods.

Now the whole mystery of the affair was merely this, that some of the fraternity, the very night before the trial, had picked the lock of the stable, and, in the place of the horse, had substituted this mare, which they found or formed to so perfect a resemblance of him, that no eye could discern the smallest distinction.

During my sojourn with these wretches, may it please your honours, I found by
 dear

dear experience, that, between the birth and the grave, there are but two sorts of happiness, of which man is capable. The one is, that of a *conscience void of giving offence*; the other is, that of a *conscience that cannot be offended*. I was therefore perpetually miserable, because neither the one nor the other was my state, for, on the one hand, I was conscious that I gave daily offence to God and man; and, on the other hand, my conscience was daily offended thereby. I was merry, indeed, though not happy, when in company, but ever dejected when left alone; so that during my three years incorporation with this fraternity, I never once lifted my heart in any appeal to God, nor ventured to petition for any kind of favour from him.

Though these reprobates, as I have intimated, continued to perpetrate, and to glory, with a merry and satisfied conscience, in their daily iniquities; yet hitherto they had not proceeded to blood.

On the night, wherein I left them, we were overtaken, and cut short of our intended rest, by a sudden and violent tempest of wind and hail, whereupon we took shelter in a waste barn.

When

When we had struck a light, we set together what straw and combustibles we could find in the house, and had just kindled a fire, when one of the company came and whispered that there was a man asleep in the far corner. Hereupon they took the candle and, with softly and cautious steps, found a pedlar stretched along, with his head on a whisp of straw, and his box close beside him. They immediately lifted the box, and brought it away, in silence, to the place where I was sitting. On opening it, with as little noise as possible, they found therein a large quantity of silks, linens, and laces, with a rich variety of hard wares; and, at the bottom, a little padlocked chest, full of English and Spanish pieces of gold; in all likelihood the whole amount of the labours of his life.

This was a prize not to be thrown down the stream. Immediately all was in a kind of unbreathing bustle, and whispering commotion. The great question was, how to possess themselves of such a prey with safety to their persons. It was objected that the man might waken, they were unluckily seen coming that way, and it may be, entering into that house; the country might be alarmed
and

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 137

and rise upon them; they might be overtaken; they might be seized in the very fact.

At length a bold villain proposed directly to cut his throat, and that then there could be no witness to testify against them; but to this it was again objected, that the blood itself would be the fearfullest and surest of all witnesses. Whereupon, another proposed to suffocate or strangle him, and bury his corps on the spot; to which scheme, though many were silent, yet no one expressly excepted.

During this deadly consultation, notwithstanding my long course of evil habit, and evil example, my blood curdled throughout my body, and fear, horror, and detestation arose in my bosom. But when they went, as I supposed, to put the deed of death into instant execution, I crouched and shrunk inward; and creeping out at the door, the dread of being also seized and murdered, gave me strength to get on my feet, and, feeling along by the wall, I got away from the house, and made off I neither knew nor cared whither.

The tempest still continued; the driving of the clouds added to the natural horrors of night; I could scarcely discern that I had a road under my foot. But, though

though I could not see my pursuers, I yet feared that their eyes were better than mine ; and I still turned and listened, to try if the foot of the murderer was behind me.

Having travelled all night as fast and far as I could from the scene of my terrors, on the rising of the day I saw a large town before me, and for the first time of three years, I lifted up my eyes, and inwardly blessed God for his mercy in my escape from so great a wickedness. Thereupon I felt a pleasure that I had never felt before ; and I said in my heart, if you will once more be my God, I will be your true servant, and will never offend or transgress any more.

I then walked on leisurely ; my fatigue went from me, and I seemed quite lightsome to myself. On entering the suburbs I met a gentleman taking his morning's walk out of town. I stopped and looked him wistfully in the face, whereupon he also stopped and eyed me with much attention. Who are you, my pretty lad ? says he. An unhappy stranger, Sir, who wants a service, or any means of earning a little honest bread. And pray what service can you do ? Not much, Sir, I fear, but my good-will shall strive hard to make up
my

my lack of ability. Then cried he, you shall be my servant. All the servants I ever had, promised every thing, but did little; I will now try what may be done by one who promises nothing. What is your name, my boy? David Doubtful, Sir? for that was my true name, though I had gone by several others. And what wages must I give you, David? Just as much, Sir, or as little as you shall please to think I deserve.

Here he took me to a handsome house, where he kept a mercer's shop in Plymouth. His name was Felton; he had been a widower of some years, and had an only son who was then at Westminster school in London.

My master, at first, set me to the most servile and vile offices, such as cleaning his and the servant's shoes; sweeping the street before his door, and carrying out the dirt of the house; but all this I did with willingness, and even with pleasure, as some little matter of penance for my long course of evil deeds.

On my separating from my brethren in iniquity, as I have told you, I was the proprietor of one hundred and seventy odd pounds, which was locked up in the common chest, being my allotted dividend of the fruits of our knavery
for

140. THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

for three successive years; but, in my present turn of mind, I would no more have accepted any part thereof than I would have taken a bar of red hot iron into my hand. I had also, in my pocket, a few crowns with some smaller silver, but these I secretly distributed among the poor, that no part, as it were, of Achan's accursed thing might remain about me.

In about three weeks, my master again changed the whole manner of my service, and set me to brush his clothes, dress his wigs, whet the knives, lay the cloth, and attend at table; but these were matters in which I was quite expert, as I had not yet forgotten my employment with my first master.

In some time after, Mr. Felton asked me if I could read; a little in the Bible, Sir, said I. And can you write too, David? If you please I will try, Sir. Why, David! this beats the hand of my clerk; where in the world did you come by all this learning? From a very good master to a very bad servant; but pray Sir, do not enquire the particulars of my naughtiness; for, indeed, you could not desire a severer monitor than my own conscience is to me. Well, my child, said the good man, I will not put

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 141

put you to pain; and so, giving me a squeeze by the hand, he went out with a glistening eye.

From this time my master shewed an uncommon respect and attention to me. He discharged me from all the menial offices of his household; he gave me his burdens of silks, and other wares to carry to his several customers; and he desired me to take particular notice of the nature and value of what I carried.

On this encouragement I became vastly more apprehensive and assiduous than he looked for. I attended the shop closely, and took notice and private notes of all that was estimated or transacted therein. My master looked quite amazed, on asking me some questions with respect to his affairs. His eldest apprentice, soon after, set up for himself. He then placed me behind the counter, over his younger apprentice, and in joint authority with his journeyman. And, soon after, he gave me the key of his till, and the trust of all his treasure. I now dined with him at the same table, and consulted and conversed with him as his friend and companion. He frequently gave me pocket-money, which, he told me, he would not charge to the account of my wages. I walked with him every evening,

evening, went to church with him every Sunday, and read to him in the Bible, every night. I was now wholly reconciled to my God, and felt him in my soul as a friend and benefactor. Pleasure played about my heart, peace lay under my pillow, and my happiness seemed as a ship that, after a long and desperate voyage, had anchored in a calm and secure haven.

I had now been something upward of a year in the service of Mr. Felton, when one day I heard a bustling noise in the street, and saw people running hither and thither across the window. I stepped to the door, and looking to the left, saw a great crowd about a cart, wherein were five criminals going to execution. I staid till they came just opposite to me, when, to my utter astonishment and terror, I saw five of my old acquaintance, and, in the front of them, the bloody villain who had proposed cutting the throat of the unfortunate pedlar. Instantly I turned all pale as my shirt, and, dreading that they would know and claim acquaintance with me, I shrunk in, and running backward, threw myself half fainting into a chair.

I now reflected that it was happy for me no one was in the shop to take notice

rice of my confusion; and endeavouring to assume some courage, on the entrance of our journeyman, I put on the most unconcerned appearance that I could.

Mr. Felton happened to dine abroad that day, and did not return till the cloth was laid for supper. He took his chair at table, and desired me to sit beside him. David, said he, is it not wonderful that people should continue so incredulous, notwithstanding the frequent and daily proofs of an all-seeing and an all detecting providence? If a sparrow falls not to the ground without the notice of our God, how much more will he take account of the life of him whom he formed in his own image. The villain trusts to hide his villany, and dares to affirm (with the first murderer) in the face of God and of man, *I know not where is my brother.* But blood has a voice, a crying voice, David; it cries aloud to heaven, from the very bowels of the earth. No depth can cover it, no darkness can conceal it, for the light that shineth in darkness will bring it forth to the day.

About twelve months ago, a pedlar was murdered in a waste house, called Fielding's barn. The murderers were of the
 I people

people whom they call Gippies, the most subtle and evasive of all sorts of reprobates, so that the fact lay a long time in silence. This pedlar, it seems, had an only brother, to whom the reversion of his substance belonged; and this brother, not seeing or hearing from him of a long time, went throughout the whole country, and through many parts of the kingdom, enquiring after him. At length he arrived, one evening, at an inn some miles from hence, where he found in the kitchen, seven men jovially seated over a bowl of punch; he quickly accepted their invitation, and having spent the time pleasantly, and the house being thronged, he and one of the company were shewn to the same bed.

About midnight, his companion began to moan most piteously, when, jogging and asking him why he groaned? O, Fielding's barn! he cried, Fielding's barn! Fielding's barn! Again, he cried, you cannot say it, you cannot say that my hand was in the murder. Again he would mutter with a half-smother'd voice, see, see how he struggles, see how he kicks; put, put him out of pain, O put him out of pain!

Hereupon the brother rose and dressed as quietly as possible, and making away

to

to the next magistrate, he returned, seized, and carried off his bedfellow before any of his comrades were apprized of the matter.

What have you done, you villain ! said the magistrate without preface, what have you done with the body of the pedlar whom you murdered in Fielding's barn ? On this question the wretch, thinking that all was detected, instantly fell on his knees. I had neither hand nor heart in the murder, Sir, he cried ; and, if you will get me a pardon, I will faithfully tell you the whole affair. On his confession the five principal rogues were taken before they were out of bed. And on his evidence, and that of their seventh companion, they were sentenced, and this day executed, and are to be gibbeted in the morning.

During this narration, I could not refrain from expressing, by my countenance and gesture, the strong compunction I felt on recollecting my long association with those reprobates ; but my good master, as I suppose, ascribed my emotions merely to the detestation which I had of their deeds.

I had been close upon two years in the service of Mr. Felton, and he had lately agreed with me at 25 *l.* yearly, whereof he paid me the last year's wages in

hand; when one evening, as I stood behind the counter, a young woman came in and desired to see such and such goods. While she was cheapening on the one hand, and I setting forth the extraordinary value on the other, several intelligent glances were exchanged between us. Whenever her eyes met mine, she instantly cast them down with a blushing modesty; and yet whenever I looked at her, I saw that her eyes had been fixed upon me. At length having bought some little matters, she made me a bashful curtesy, and going out of the door, she turned upon me with a significant glance, and departed.

All that night I felt myself as I had never felt before; I turned and turned again from the image of this girl, and yet she seemed to stand before me, and to look, and to look upon me, as she had done the day before.

For five tedious days she withheld herself from my sight, and I feared that I should never behold her any more. At length she came, and I strove in vain to conceal my joy on her appearance. After cheapening and paying for some little matters, she cast her eye on a piece of silk, which, she said, she fancied greatly, but feared that her pocket would not reach so far. O Miss! said I, we shall
not

not quarrel for such a matter, provided I know where to call for the money. On Sarah Simper, Sir, said she, at such a sign, in such a row.

As I had three or four spare hours from business every evening, I gladly laid hold of the occasion I had gotten for spending that time in visits to my beloved. I went, indeed, without forming any purpose or intention, save the pleasure of seeing her. Her fondness seemed, at least, to equal my own; and, though we proceeded at times to toying, and dallying, yet for three weeks we kept within warrantable limits. But this was not always the case. Our first transgression was succeeded, on her part, by tears and reproaches, and, on mine, by a depth of sorrow and remorse.

As this was my first fault, with respect to woman, my conscience was yet unsteeled. I spent the night in sighs and tears of contrition; and I repeated a thousand promises and vows to my God that I never would be guilty of the like again.

For five entire days I kept from going to her. At length I considered, that, as I had injured her, I ought to make her such recompence as was in my power. I put about twelve pounds into my pocket,

148 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

being all that I had left of my last year's salary, and went and told her that I was come to take my leave of her; then, pouring the money into her lap, I promised to give her what I should earn from time to time, and to marry her whenever I should be enabled to maintain a family. Here we both fell into tears, and from tears we proceeded to caresses, and so forth, till at last we became as guilty as we had been before.

In like manner, for the six ensuing weeks, I kept on in a course of repenting and sinning, and of sinning, and again repenting. Every night I formed resolutions which I imagined would be stronger than any I had made before, but whatever force I put on myself, whatever strength I exerted, I never was able to persevere for three days together. When I felt myself drawn to her, as by some irresistible power, I vowed, and flattered myself on the way, that I would return without transgressing; but, when I came to her, I found it quite as impossible to keep from sinning with her as it was to keep from her. Thus, by frail and falsified vows, I daily continued to add to the heap of my guilt; till at length I became hopeless of any ability to resist temptation, and sinned on with my

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 149

my eyes open, and yet with less remorse than before.

As I was sitting with her one evening, a bailiff entered suddenly, and laid an action upon her for fifteen pounds, which, he said, she promised to pay for her mother in her last illness. Whether the debt was feigned, and the caption preconcerted, between them, I know not; but I afterward recollected that she did not seem to be so alarmed as one would have expected on such an occasion. On the other hand, my soul was filled with bitter and distracting thoughts. I could not think of suffering my love to be confined among fellows in a common prison; and yet, how to come by the money I knew not. I offered the man my note payable when my salary should be due; but he refused to depart without instant payment. Hereupon I hurried home, and taking out 15*l.* of my master's money, I returned and discharged the action.

From this time my fair one began to extend her appetites, and to rise in her passions. Under colour of being with child, her longing and fits came frequent upon her, and I was in a manner constrained to indulge her till I had taken of my master's money to the amount of fifty pounds.

David, said she, one day, it is time to tell you that I must soon quit my mantua-making business, for I am growing too big to appear with decency among my customers. So you must take other lodgings for me, and provide a sufficient fund to defray the many necessary expences of child-birth. And where, my dearest Sally ! may such a fund be provided ? I have already gone lengths for you that may bring me to the gallows. If you had not been a poor spirited fellow, says she, you could not bear to live in the fears that haunt you so ; you would long since have made away with that old scoundrel your master. Here, throw this little dust into his broth, or his posset, and then you may wallow in money without fear of account.

Here I looked her full in the face, when every beauty that had once enchanted me, suddenly vanished from my sight, and I saw nothing but the dire head of a snaky Medusa. However I suppressed my horror as well as I could ; and putting back the paper, no, no, no, no, Sally, said I, I would rather die the worst of deaths myself, than have a hand in making away with my kind old master. And die you shall then, she cried, for I will not perish alone. She then

then dropped on her knees and vowed, with fearful imprecations, that she would go directly to Mr. Felton, and make a discovery of my robberies; that she would also go to the next magistrate and swear a rape against me; and that she would poison herself and the bastard within her, that she might not bring into the world any part of such a villain.

While she spoke, her aspect looked livid and deadly, and wrath and desperation flashed in fire from her eyes.

My dear Sally, said I, lower your passions a little, give me that paper again; we shall see what may be done. And here I leave you my watch as a pledge of my return by to-morrow at noon. This I did, however, not with the smallest intention of keeping my promise; for I determined never more to look her in the face. But I bequeathed to her, as it were, the only stake of value which remained to me, that the wretch whom I had ruined might not be left altogether without means of life.

When I got into the street I hastened homeward, without deliberating a moment on what I was about, or on the consequences that might ensue. My master was in a back chamber, looking over

some letters, when I rushed in precipitately, and shut the door behind me. What is the matter, child, says he; are you not well? You look pale and affrighted, what is the matter, David? O Sir! O Sir! and I sunk upon my knees, I bring to you a villain, a reprobate, a thief, a robber, a betrayer of trusts, also the vilest sinner that ever sinned against God and against man. I got in league with a bad woman, who seduced me by her beauty, and then prevailed upon me to defraud and rob you, and would have persuaded me to murder you, but there I stopt short; I could not be prevailed upon to murder you, my master! Pray then, said he somewhat sternly, to what intent are you come? to demand justice Sir! I cried, and to appease my own conscience by suffering for my faults. Tell me then, said he, mildly, and tell me truly, of how much money have you defrauded me? Of fifty pounds, Sir! I answered, a few shillings under or over. Rise then, pray rise, my David! he cried; I would not bring you to shame and much less to punishment, for five times the value of fifty pounds. I owe you, for your services, very nearly that sum, and I forgive you the remainder with all my heart. No, Sir! I cried aloud

aloud, and burst into tears, you do not forgive me, you cannot forgive me, for this your goodness does but heap the heavier guilt upon my soul!

○ He then got up and came to me, and raising me to his bosom, he embraced me, and cried, I rejoice over thee, my David, I rejoice over thee, my child, as Heaven rejoiceth over the one sinner that repenteth, more than over the ninety and nine that have no need of repentance. You now know your own frailties; you are sensible of your lapses, you will be cautious of future falls; and you stand upon firmer ground than ever.

You know me not, I exclaimed! You know me not, my good master, I am wholly irreclaimable. The devil has taken possession of me, and reigns through all my members. I find it quite in vain to strive or struggle against him. I have no more strength than a midge against temptation; no more power than a weak and fainting man against a torrent that already has borne him far away.

I will pray for you, my son, said the good man vehemently! I will wrestle with my God for you! and his grace shall be sufficient. No, Sir, I replied, after that which has happened, I never shall be able to look you in the face, I will not

trust myself. I know that I should fall on the first trial. Will you leave me then, he cried, will you leave me, my son David? and he took out his handkerchief and wiped away the falling tear. I must, I answered, I must leave you, my dearest master, I should be miserable if I staid. I will go directly to sea, I will confine myself in some ship, where I shall be shut from any commerce or communication with mankind, and not have it within my reach to wrong or damage any person. And, indeed, I could not bear to stay in one town, or even in one kingdom with that bad woman. Where may she be found, David; said Mr. Felton. Ah, Sir! I exclaimed, leave her to God, and to her own evil conscience, I beseech you. I believe she is with child by me. Do not desire, my master, to hurt a little innocent that has not yet seen the light! No, my David, no; I mean nothing but comfort to her. I mean to supply her wants, and to soften her distresses. She will not then be tempted to wish hurt to her benefactor, and I will take care of the little wretch which she carries in her body, for your sake, my David.

There was something so affecting, gentlemen, in such a proof of wonderful goodness

goodness, as must have struck to the heart of the most abandoned reprobate. I was quite overcome thereby. I fell suddenly at his feet, and I wished to pour out my very soul, in the same manner as I poured my tears upon them.

As he now found that I was bent and determined on departing, David, says he, since you will go, you must not go unprovided. A sailor ought to have proper necessaries; and, if you will give me your company for three or four days longer, I will get you a good birth in some ship or other. Mean time I would advise you to set about your preparations, for which purpose you must accept these fifty guineas, which you may please to return me, when some happy adventure shall furnish you with means. No, no, Sir, I cried, putting his purse back with my hand, your plan is not the plan of your reprobate servant; your good births are not at all for my purpose. I will go as a common sailor; the meanest offices and the greatest drudgery will be a penance too little, much too little, for my transgressions. And, so saying, I turned and went hastily out.

I made

156 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

I made directly to the Quay, where I saw a croud of citizens intermixed with sailors. On going up, I found that they were enlisting volunteers, to whom they offered from one to three guineas per man. And what will you give me, captain, if I go with you? He then looked earnestly at me, and, having eyed me, several times, from head to foot, I will give you, my lad, said he, five guineas in your fist, and here is my hand, for a hearty welcome into the bargain. If your honour then will be pleased to order those five pieces to be laid out for me in such necessaries as you think fitting; I live at such a place, and shall be ready at a call. Enough, said the captain, our ship is called the Centurion, of thirty guns, the brave Daniel Jenkins commander. We set out by morning's tide, between ten and eleven, and if you come without a call you will be the more welcome. So saying, he gave me a familiar shake by the hand, and we parted.

I then went directly home, and calling Mr. Felton aside, I told him of my success and engagement in the Centurion, suppressing only the time of my early departure; for I felt that I could not stand the

I the parting with him, and I thought it best to make it as little painful to him and myself, as might be.

During supper, I endeavoured to chat, but I could not. And as Mr. Felton, at times, looked affectionately upon me, I turned my head aside, and a silent tear stole down my cheek.

I spent the night in sighs and tears, and, getting up before day, I took my shoes in my hand, and, stepping softly down stairs, would have stolen out at the street door; but, in that instant, the door of a side parlour was opened, and, before I could look about, my master had me in his arms. Will you leave me, then, David, will you indeed, leave me? he cried. O, David, David, I love you next to my only child. Stay with me yet, my son, O, stay with me, my David, and I will do every thing; I will do all things that may be done for you.

Here I sunk, and was just fainting, under the pressure of his goodness. Do not kill me, my master, do not kill me, not right, I cried. You must no longer be burdened by my body of sin and death; as God has forsaken me, I must leave you, my master, let him do with me as he will, and if I perish, I perish. So saying,

158 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

saying, I broke from him, and away I rushed; weeping and sobbing all the way, as though my heart would cleave in sunder.

The captain received me with great cordiality, and at times called me his namesake, and was very familiar with me. The sailors also, after his example, began to affect me without any appearance of envy; for though I had not been exercised in their profession, yet I was strong, hale, and active, and ready to assist them at every turn.

In the mean time, please your honours, it may appear very extraordinary, though I felt daily compunction, and nightly wept many tears for having offended my God throughout the course of my life; yet I neither prayed to him, nor besought pardon from him, nor applied to him for any kind of support or assistance.

I was now incorporated with a fraternity whose wickedness was of a species quite different from that of my former brotherhood. Our sailors were so far from cheating and defrauding, that they scarce seemed to have any regard for property; and they were as brave a set of fellows as ever trod a deck. But then they were as hardened to any sense of religion or piety as the nether millstone;

stone; and the sacred and tremendous names of God, and his Christ, were of no other import to them than as the balls of a billiard-table, to be tossed and bandied about for sport.

At first this was a matter of great offence and horror to me. Can there be a God, I would say to myself, and can he suffer his tremendous name to be insulted and blasphemed as it is by these wretches? But, alas! I was not as one of the three captives at Babylon; I could not be cast into the furnace and come forth without a singe. In time this profaneness became less irksome to my ears; and, by degrees, I began to relish and to catch the common contagion.

At times however some thoughts of God and a Saviour would come into my mind, and the pious impressions of my infancy would return upon me; but I did my best to banish them, as they served but to torment me.

At times again, I would silently expostulate, as it were, with God. It is true, I would say to him, I have been wicked, desperately wicked, through a long course of sinning; but did I not long strive, and struggle, and fight against temptation? If you meant me for yourself, why did you not make me with less proneness

proneness to evil; or why did you not give me greater strength to resist?

Again shocking and blasphemous thoughts would enter into my gloomy soul: As though the gospel were all a fable, and religion nothing but priest-craft. That all events were of chance. That men were good or evil, merely according to constitution; and that either there was no God, or he was too great, or too distant, to concern himself with the insignificant affairs of mortals. But these infusions of the temper were never of long continuance; and again I would return to *believing and trembling*.

Our ship had been destined to protect the trade in the Levant. Within the space of five months we had rescued from the captors six English ships, and made prize of three stout frigates, of those African pirates who war upon the world; when the boy from the mast-head cried out a sail! We immediately made chase, and found by evening that we had gained considerably upon her; but as the night came on thick and hazy, we shortened sail, and lay too till morning, but hung out no lights.

At dawn of day we renewed the chase, though no sail was then in sight; but we had not continued it above four or

five leagues, when we clearly discerned the same vessel, and perceived that she altered her course and was bearing down toward us.

Hereupon we shortened sail, and waited for her. But we had not waited long, till we perceived a second vessel that seemed in chace of the first; and some time after saw a third that seemed in chace of the two former.

On this the lieutenant, an old and experienced sailer, looked somewhat blank, and desired that the captain would instantly call a council of war. Gentlemen, says he, the many captures we have lately made could not fail of informing our enemies that we are in these seas; and I apprehend, with great reason, that they have made choice of their best means to over-reach and over-match us, and to fall with their united forces upon us. And, indeed ye may already perceive that the ship which we had in chace, has shortened sail, and waits to be joined by her two consorts, whom she seemed so lately to fear. I think, as the jockeys say, that we have more than foot for them; and all the question is, Whether old England shall make use of her feet to fly, while she has any hands left wherewith she may fight? At this they cried, with one voice,

no

no flying! no flying! let them come on, the circumcised dogs, as many as may be of them; we will neither take nor give quarter, they or we must to the bottom! To work then, my brave lads! cries Captain Jenkins, for we are likely to have as warm a-bout of it as we could wish.

To bustle went all hands. We had a clear ship in a moment; and, for the first time, stowed our hammocks in the nettings. The captain then choosing a dozen of the best marksmen, he disposed them in the tops, with strict orders to direct their fire only at those who appeared to be officers.

Our ship at this time was full manned with about two hundred and seventy spirits, all as ready and desirous to go and meet death as a beau to go to a ball, or an alderman to a feast.

The three consorts were now joined, as our mate had foreseen, and bore down upon us, right before the wind; and then it was that my sins came crouding into my mind, and I believe I was the only person of the ship's company who trembled.

They all came up with a desperate boldness; and while one attacked us on our bow, a second lay upon our quarter, while

while the third bore away under our stern, and raked us fore and aft with her whole broadside; nor were we idle in the mean time, but plied our guns with such spirit and success as soon obliged them to sheer off.

Our ship was of English oak, and stood their shot to a wonder; our metal was also much weightier than theirs; but then they out numbered us three to one, in men and in guns.

Having got out of the reach of our shot, they moved off, as intending to make their escape; but, having repaired their damage, as well as time would allow, they returned upon us with two-fold resolution and fury.

Then it was, gentlemen, that such a scene was opened, as was sufficient to strike hell itself with horror.

They now entertained us with a new kind of warfare. For, getting up within pistol-shot, they tossed their granadoes or hand shells among us, that were filled with broken bottles, and with rusty and ragged pieces of old iron. These did fearful execution, and our deck was quickly covered with blood and brains, and pieces of human flesh, while the noise of the cannon could scarcely drown
the

the screams of the wounded, and the groans of the dying.

In this desperate situation we loaded all our guns with grape shot, which made such havock among our enemies as obliged two of them to sheer away again as fast as they could, while the third kept playing upon us at a distance, till we forced her also to follow her consorts.

We now had leisure to clear our deck, and, with sorrowful hearts, threw our dead companions overboard.

Having once more set all to rights, we bore down on all three, but they crouded away from us, maintaining a running fight with their stern chace; and as they levelled their shot almost wholly at our rigging, by evening we were incapable of further pursuit.

Mean while we had plied them with our cannon so well that as it began to wax dusky, we perceived the crew of the hindmost in much confusion, and making signals of distress to their consorts. Soon after we saw them heave out their boat, and they had scarce crouded into her, when their ship went down. Hereon we gave a great shout, which we repeated on seeing their boat overset. But, as the Moors are excellent swimmers, I suppose most of them

them got safe, and were taken in by their companions. In the mean space our most gallant Captain Jenkins had his right leg and thigh carried off by a cannon shot; I think it was the last shot the enemy fired.

As I stood by my captain's side, I caught him in my arms before he fell to the board, and cried out for the Surgeons; but the effusion of blood was so great, and so impossible to be stanch'd, that we quickly despaired of any life for him.

As I supported him on deck with my right arm, he found himself growing faint, and turned his face to me. David, said he, I am not afraid to die, for I am a Christian. I believe, as surely as I am here, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief; and he is so great and so gracious, that he will not suffer hell or the grave to disappoint him of an end for which he paid so dear a price. Here, my David, here is my purse and my watch, which I bequeath to your love as my last legacy; and here is my diamond ring with which I entrust you, as a token to my dear daughter, if ever it shall be your fortune to revisit old England. And if you should go to London, my dear David, enquire out my good old friend, alderman

man Bicker; tell him of my behaviour during your service with me, and that I beseech him to use his interest with our protector in procuring my pay for my poor sweet child.

And that I will, right heartily, cried out Sir Thomas. I will also speak a word for yourself, my lad; the protector cannot refuse his favour to one who has had the honour of serving in the action of the Centurion, whose fame our very enemies have spread through Europe. But, pray, proceed in your narration; I long to hear the event of so interesting a scene.

Though we greatly grieved for our captain, we were still more concerned for the honour of England, lest our good ship should fall into the hands of the barbarians. For she now lay like a hulk on the face of the water. She could neither pursue nor avoid an enemy; and though she had been in plight, we had not hands left sufficient to work her.

Night came on apace, hostilities ceased on both sides; the pirates hung out lights to prevent, as we supposed, their parting from each other; and we mournfully called a muster of our men, in the dark; whereon we found that, of two hundred and seventy odd men, we had but fifty remaining,

remaining, twenty of whom were wounded, though not disabled.

Come, my lads, cried the old lieutenant, it is as good to be merry as sad. We have worked enough to day to give us an appetite. Let us have something to eat, and a bowl of punch; and, if we die by morning, let us not die with cold hearts and empty stomachs. Moreover, for your encouragement, I take upon me to promise that, if you will be guided, I will make you masters of one of yonder vessels before sunrise.

We engaged compliance to a tittle; and, accordingly after we had refreshed ourselves plentifully, he ordered our boats to be heaved overboard and let drive with the wind. We then set our watch, and went down to take a few hours repose.

Two hours before day we were roused by the lieutenant, and the first thing we did was to bore a large hole in the side of our ship, about a foot below water, for which we had no occasional plug prepared.

As soon as the day dawned, we set watches to give us timely notice of the enemies approach; and then lay down on our small arms, out of observation.

The pirates, as we presumed, held up their glassses, but, seeing neither men nor
boats

boats in our ship, they concluded that we had made an elopement by night, and came on without precaution or preparation.

As soon as they had arrived within about half a league, our watchmen, according to order, drew forth the plug, and, creeping upon deck, crouched down with us.

The consorts had agreed to board our ship on each side, in confidence of a rich and unresisting prize. But the moment that we heard the first of them rustling along side, and perceived that they were beginning to get up our side, we jumped up, as one man, and setting up a great shout, and, overturning all we met, leaped into their vessel.

Never was amazement like that of the enemy ! They scarce made any resistance, and, in less than a minute, not a Moor was left upon deck.

Mean time the other pirate had boarded our late vessel, almost to a man. They had heard, indeed, the shout, with the clamour and groans of the fellows, but did not rightly know what to make of it ; till, moving close round the head of our former ship, we shot the few who were left in the second frigate ; then, throwing out our grapplings, we towed her off, and

and then bored and sunk her in the face of her owners.

They thereupon set upon such a yell of despair and horror as was affecting, even to the hearts of their enemies. At length they turned the cannon of the Centurion upon us, but we soon got out of reach of their shot; and by the time we were about three leagues from them we saw our good Centurion go to the bottom, the glorious tomb of her noble captain.

We now thought that, of about a thousand assailants, there was not one left to carry tidings to their native country of their defeat. But, going down to the state cabin, I saw a young man richly dressed, and of a noble aspect, leaning wounded upon a couch, with three attendants about him.

As I entered, he gave me a look that seemed compounded of apprehension and courage, and accosted me in broken English, for he had travelled much, and resided for a season in London.

I know, said he, that I am your prisoner; I also know what I am to expect. Draw your cutlafs then, and let me join my countrymen! No Sir, I replied, you have nothing to fear from me. A man, who deserves that name, owes nothing

but love to man, except when he is assaulted; the brave see no enemy in the feeble or the conquered.

Where have you learned, he cried, the sentiments of my own soul? but your generosity shall lose you nothing; demand what ransom you please and it shall be paid you. I am not commander in chief, I answered, but, as far as my influence reaches, you are free as air, and shall be bound to us by nothing but your affections. Then, stretching forth his arm, your hand, my brother! he cried, and giving me a kind squeeze, the tear came into his eye.

I went directly on deck and informed our little crew, now reduced to thirty three, of what had passed between the noble Moor and myself, and told them I hoped they would be so generous as to make my promise good. To this the greater number gladly assented, but some of them murmured. Hereupon I remonstrated that we were already rich enough, for we had brought all the money out of our own ship, beside the great treasure in the pirate frigate which we had not yet divided. I further represented that we knew not what the events of war or fortune might be; and that it would not be imprudent to make a friend
on

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 171

on the African coast, who, in all appearance, was a person of high consideration; and, with these reasons; at length all appeared to be satisfied.

I then carried the pleasing tidings to my new friend, and took with me our only surviving surgeon, who dressed the wound in his thigh, which had been made by a musket ball.

As soon as the surgeon had withdrawn, the noble Osmyn of Petra, for so he was called, presented me with his purse, and a carbuncle ring of extraordinary value, and pressed them earnestly upon me, but I as peremptorily refused them, and this refusal appeared to distress him greatly.

During the five days in which we continued together, I had him as tenderly and as honourably attended as our circumstances would admit; and I spent with him all the time I could spare from my duties and great fatigues upon deck, as all the hands we had were kept busily employed by splicing the ropes, refitting the mangled sails and rigging, and in repairing the breaches of the vessel; for our shot had bored her sides quite through in several places.

On these accounts we sailed but heavily, still making towards the Straights, and daily wishing to meet or be overtaken.

ken by some English ship of force, to which we might safely confide ourselves and our treasures.

On the sixth morning, having arrived within twenty leagues of the mouth, the day discovered to us that we were almost within shot of a ship that carried English colours. Hereat we rejoiced with exceeding great joy, and slackening our sail, and heaving out a small boat, ten of us slipped into it, and away we rowed with all our might. As we approached, we saw numbers, in English dresses, walking to and again on deck; and getting alongside, they threw ropes over to us, and we mounted with great alacrity.

Hitherto we were so intoxicated with joy, that we had not the precaution to hail them till we found ourselves in the very thick of our enemies. I looked round, and seeing none but tawny and hostile faces about me, I civilly demanded who, and of what country they were; when a ruffian, gathering his spittle, spirted it full in my face, and, at the same time, gave me a buffet on the side of my cheek. Then I did not once reflect either where or among whom I was, but, with one stroke of my fist, I stretched him flat upon the deck: Then throwing up the heels of another who had

raised

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 173

raised his arm against me, he fell with his head foremost across his fellow; and twisting round on a third, who had seized me behind by the shoulder, I dragged him under me, and we fell together upon the board. Here a croud of them gathered over me, and, each helping to hold a leg or an arm, I was bound with cords that crushed my flesh to the very bone, and then tumbled with kicks, like a dog, along the deck.

Mean time my nine companions who had offered to interpose, were also seized and bound, and cast into the hold.

For about three hours I lay in excessive anguish, though, through a sort of stubborn pride, I endeavoured to suppress my groans. In the interim I felt the ship begin to move, and soon after I perceived all in a bustle about me. Again I heard, from within and without several discharges of small arms, and as I saw several Moors fall lifeless or convulsed and biting the deck around me, I rightly concluded that the ships were engaged. I gave a long and deep groan, and I cried aloud, O, my countrymen! my brave countrymen! why am I not with you, why have I not the happiness of dying with you and for you? and my

heart was so wrung that I fainted quite away.

I afterward learned that my true and valiant fellows had refused to submit upon summons. That the pirate, seeing them so few, and being desirous of saving the frigate for their own use, had attacked them with small arms, which were warmly answered on our part; when, having dropped or disabled above half of our brave English, with two of Osymyn's attendants who happened to be upon deck, they entered and mercilessly butchered the remainder, among whom was our old mate and surgeon.

Mean time I lay insensible to all that passed, till a ruffian, seeing me pale and lifeless, in all appearance, gave me a wring by the nose. Hereupon I awaked to the bitterest sensations. I remembered me of my gallant messmates, who had so loved and caressed me above my merits; and my tears, without sigh or groan, went in streams down my cheeks.

At length I heard a voice, a known voice, as I thought, crying, where is my friend, where is my brother David? and turning my head a little, I saw my noble Osymyn just entering the ship.

O, gentlemen! be not apt to judge hardly of all who have not learned Christ,
by

by the form and by the letter. Osmyn, my Osmyn proves that he may be in the heart of those who never acknowledged his name, although they have felt his power. And, indeed, as the apostle writes those who never learned his law, yet, having his law, or rather himself, in their hearts, shall be justified.

Having instantly cast an eye of searching love around, he 'spied where I lay, and coming and throwing himself beside me, he put one arm about, and cried, O, my brother! my brother David! is it thus that my people use you? I grieve that you christians should beat us all to nothing in honour and humanity. He then took out his knife, and having tenderly cut my cords, he strained his own ability to help me to rise.

He then called for the captain who came bowing to him with great respect. Their discourse was long and earnest. At length Osmyn rose high in passion, and gave the captain a back stroke with his hand across the face. I observed his choler swelling, almost to suffocation, but he suppressed his indignation, and retired in silence. I heard Osmyn then giving some Orders to the men, but as I was a stranger to their language, I knew not the purport of any thing that passed.

Soon after, however, I saw my nine companions brought from the hold, and unbound. And Osmyn, turning to me, desired me to tell my people that they were all free, and that as soon as we landed in Barbary he would take the first means of sending them with honour to their native country. Ah! my Lord, I cried, I am sorry that you struck the captain, he has many adherents here, and will certainly seek some method of revenge. He dare not, he dare not, replied my friend; the villain would have disputed with me the property of my own frigate, which I manned and fitted out at my own expence. But if I hear or see any more of his insolence, as soon as we land I will complain to the Dey my uncle, and have the rogue impaled alive.

He then ordered out the long-boat, and, turning to me, said, I am going, David, to take an account of what effects are left in my ship; and I would take you with me if you were in a condition to go; but I will soon return, and, in the mean time, order the surgeon to do his best for allaying the swelling in your limbs.

During his absence the ship's company, and even the captain, whose name was

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 177

was Barbar, behaved themselves toward me and my fellows with great, though silent, civility; and a plentiful mess was served up to us for dinner. But during our repast I observed that the captain called such and such of his men to the quarter-deck, where he held with them a long and whispering kind of conversation.

These fellows, as it seems were the most barbarous and bloody of all their barbarous and bloody countrymen. Having taken the ship wherein we then were, a merchantman, carrying about twenty guns, they had massacred every creature on board, and then dressed themselves in the clothes of the English, in order to inveigle others into the like calamity; while they dispatched their own frigate back to Tunis to get recruits.

My noble friend did not return till late in the evening. He then ordered supper to be got ready, and the state-cabin to be prepared for him and me to lie in; but I whispered and besought him to excuse me for declining that honour, as I perceived that the favours which he did me, had already given much umbrage and offence to his countrymen.

I know not whence, or for what purpose, forebodings may come; but all

that night, my spirits were exceedingly sad and depressed; and though my fellows, and I were put to lie in a part of the ship, the most remote from my friend, yet I imagined that I heard secret treadings and mutterings; and again, at dead of night, that I heard the distant sound of trampling and struggling, as of people in doing and receiving violence.

I was still sore from the tyings and the bruises which I had received; when, toward the end of a sleepless night, a gang of armed ruffians entered the place where we lay, and loaded us with irons. They then took away all our clothes and treasures, and threw to each of us a canvas shirt and drawers, as slaves prepared for the market.

The moment they laid their hands upon me, it occurred that they would not have dared to do it, if they had not first made away with my dear friend and patron; at which thought my soul grew instantly sick, and a dark cloud of sorrow fell heavily upon it.

Sore and shackled as I was, I got immediately on deck, and looked wistfully out to sea, but could discover no frigate. I then shuffled along as fast as I could to the cabin, where I had parted the night before with my Osmyrn, and looking in at
the

the door, I cried aloud, where are you, Lord Osmyn, where are you, my master! my friend! my dear Osmyn! where are you, where are you?

When no answer could be had I returned wild with rage and grief, and notwithstanding my chains, had I not been disabled by my contusions, I should have done my best to throttle every man I met. But all I could do was to wring my hands and roar aloud to all around, ye butchers! ye cut-throats! ye villains of all villains! what have ye done with your lord, what have you done with your master, what have ye done with my friend, with my Osmyn, my Osmyn?

For two nights and two days I tasted nothing but water, which I drank in large quantities, as my soul, as well as body, was in a ferment and a fever. On the third day the captain fearing that I would die of grief, and that he should lose what he proposed to get by my sale, sent a kind of interpreter to me, to let me know that on the night in which I parted with Osmyn, he and the captain soon after had some warm words concerning their rights in the frigate, and in the English now on board; whereupon Osmyn swore that he would not remain any longer in his ship; and that, taking with him a number of hands, he re-imbarked

im embarked in the frigate, and directly set sail.

As this tale carried with it some face of a fact, I grew easier in my mind; and, on the very day following, having anchored in the bay of Algiers, my fellows and I were taken into the town, and sold at public market.

I happened to be bought by one of the Dey's factors, who immediately sent me to work at his country palace.

This work was a most stupendous undertaking. Above five hundred men had been daily employed in it for two years past, and yet a third of it was not done when I arrived.

A large lawn extended itself in the front of the palace, and here the Dey had ordered a great canal to be dug, and from its excavation a mount to be raised, whose base measured three hundred yards in circumference. The ascent was easy and spiral, much resembling the prints you have seen of the tower of Babel. The border of this ascent was adorned all the way with lofty cedars interlaced with all sorts of aromatic and flowering shrubs; and from the top, before I left it, was to be seen the bay, the shipping, the city, and country all around, while distant mountains on the one hand, and an extent

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 181

tent of ocean on the other, alone bounded the prospect.

You will think it very extraordinary Gentlemen, when I assure you that till I was in a state of slavery, my mind never was free. Hitherto I had been the slave of sin, and of appetite, of passions, and of fears. But here I counted to set up my rest for life, I had no parents, no wealthy kindred, no friend upon earth, to whom I might look for a pennyworth of ransom. There was therefore no further prospect for me, there was nothing further left to excite my desire or to excite my concern; and I sunk gradually, as it were, down into the peace of my own nothingness.

I had been lately the possessor of the value of some thousands, and now I had not wherewithal to purchase a morsel of bread. But I looked back on the many scenes of my very many wickednesses, and I did not look up to, but looked down before, my God, and cried, Not enough it is not yet enough, O Lord! something sharper, something heavier! some punishment that may expiate and reconcile me to my God!

One night, as I lay on my bed of stubble, I looked up to God, through the cloud of my own iniquities, and said,

In

In life, O my Lord, lay what thou pleasest upon me, but, in the hour of death, save, save me from the judgment! whereupon something within me said, fear not, thou vile wretch, fear not thou worm, David, for nothing shall be able to pluck thee out of my hands. This gave me great consolation, and consolation was followed by peace, and peace was followed by pleasure; insomuch that I possessed more of the sweetness of heart-felt enjoyment, than came to the share of twenty sensualists.

The Dey or regent then being was called Ali Eben Buchar. He was a great warrior, and yet a man of an amiable character, which is rarely the case with Moorish governors. He had been at Constantinople when I was enslaved; and on his return, he was so solicitously engaged in matters of state, that he was not at leisure to come and see our works. Toward the end of the second year of my servitude, he arrived with a pompous train. He was a portly and comely personage, though his complexion was a deep olive. He expressed high delight on surveying what we had done; and he ordered a festival of three days to be proclaimed for his labourers, with sports, martial exercises, and prizes for the victors.

Great

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 183

Great preparations were made for this entertainment. In a plain, on the left of the palace, a square of half a mile diameter was enclosed with pales; within which none were permitted to enter, save the Dey and his train, with those who laboured in his several works, amounting to about a thousand men. On one side within the pales, a throne was erected with two seats, and lower benches were placed on either hand.

Early on the morning of the first appointed day, the festival was opened by the sound of the trumpets and horns, and other martial instruments.

It had been a custom among us of the labourers who were young and active, when the day's work was over, to divert our fellows with various exercises and feats, such as wrestling, running, leaping, and tossing or trundling leaden balls, and so forth; I was, therefore, up, among the soonest, in hopes of distinguishing myself on the occasion.

By the dawning, the city was emptied of its inhabitants, and crouds came on after crouds, from all parts of the country, so that the pales were soon circled by an innumerable concourse.

Then came Ali, with his attendants, and, entering the pale, ascended his throne,

throne, while his courtiers and guards arranged themselves behind.

Then were exalted, on poles, the prizes that were to be given to such of the slaves or labourers, as excelled in tossing the javelin, or in hitting a distant mark with the bow or with the sling. But, as I had not been practised in these matters, I contented myself for this day, with being a spectator. Some of the candidates, on this occasion, were extremely expert, and would send an arrow or sling a stone more directly to the mark than any European could shoot a musket bullet; accordingly the generous Ali added freedom to the prizes which they had won, and immediately preferred them among his troops.

After this, Ali, to entertain his people, ordered a dozen of his courtiers to run at the ring. Immediately a number of neighing steeds, richly caparisoned, were led by lackeys into the lists. The young nobles, without stirrup or saddle, vaulted lightly into their seats, and turning and winding their fiery horses with wonderful command and address, gave high delight to the spectators. Each of them then caught a javelin which was tossed to him by an attendant; and, setting out, successively, almost at their speed,

speed, three of them, in mid course, bore off a small ring of brass, from the thread, by which it hung, on the point of his lance.

After this, again, a great number of burlesque comedians entered the pales, in order to act one of their African drolls or pantomimes; some of them represented men, some tygers, lions and bears; others ghosts, and others goblins. But I could make nothing of such a jumblement of intencion, although it gave great diversion to the populace. And thus ended the sports of the present day.

While the people retired homeward, several waggons were drawn in, heavy laden with victuals and cooling liquors, wherewith all the slaves and labourers were plentifully regaled.

The second day was ushered in with the like pomp as the former; and prizes were set up for lifting the weight, for tossing the coit, and for pitching the bar.

At a little distance from the front of the throne, a ring was fastened to a leaden mass, that weighed about five hundred pounds, and above fifty adventurers successively attempted to lift, but not a man of them could move it. I then advanced, bowing lowly toward the throne, and putting my right hand in the ring, and exerting

exerting my powers, I raised it fairly from the ground, whereupon a great shout was suddenly given by all my companions who worked with me at the mount. Hereupon a black came up, of herculean bulk and brawn, and, desiring that fifty pounds more should be added to the lead, he lifted and swung them in the air with apparent ease, and the prize was accordingly adjudged to him.

A large iron coit was then given to the competitors, and about a dozen of them tossed it to a distance that was thought extraordinary. I then took it up and threw it three foot beyond the furthest. But again, the black slave came up, who was not of our company, and tossed it two foot beyond my cast, and consequently atchieved the second prize.

A long and massive bar was then presented to us, but all refused to take it in hand, till the same black seized it, and, putting one end to his foot, pitched it off to a distance that raised a cry of admiration. I then took my turn, and giving my whole strength and action to this single cast, I pitched it some inches beyond the throw of my rival, whereupon another shout was given and repeated. The black then was wholly enflamed by envy and resentment, and reclaiming the bar,
and

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 187

and exerting all his force, he threw it to a length, that, on admeasurement, was judged to exceed my cast, and he proudly laid hold on the third prize.

The great Ali then ordered me to be brought before him. I went, and, bending on my knee, laid my head to the earth. Rise, said he; I obeyed and he surveyed me with long and earnest attention. Young man, he cried, you have been this day something unfortunate, but you have not the less merit; put this ring on your finger, it discharges you, henceforth from all kind of labour; but it does not enfranchise you, because, for the present, I do not chuse to part with you. I respectfully took the ring, and again bowing to the ground, retired in silence.

A tournament of the young nobles then ensued, wherein great feats of action and prowess were shewn. And the day ended with another droll to which I gave no heed.

The morning of the third day was opened as usual, and prizes were exhibited for wrestling, for running, and for leaping.

Immediately the black champion stepped formidably forth, and challenged any to approach, who desired to be crushed

ed to death, but not a man accepted this charitable invitation. Unwilling, then, that this boaster should carry off the prize without a contest, I stepped from my rank, depending more upon action than force to cope with him. We both stripped to our canvas drawers, and his looks and gestures menaced me with instant destruction. I advanced however to essay him, and he stretched his arms toward me, as a vulture would reach his pounces to seize upon a chicken; when, springing instantly up to him, I put a hand upon each of his shoulders, and, vaulting lightly over his head, I turned nimbly upon him, threw up his heels, and laid him at his length on the earth.

As the contrast of our colours had rendered us remarkable to all the spectators a shout was set up that rent the very elements. But the Black arose, and roared aloud with his lion-like voice, for justice; and the judges, on weighing the matter, appointed me to another trial, forbidding further fraud.

Again we prepared to engage, and again my black adversary stretched forth his arms, with eyes flashing fire, and features distorted with rage; when retiring from him, as if dismayed, I shot forward like lightening, and springing
from

from the ground, I pitched the whole weight of my body into his bosom, This staggered him some steps backward, when, continuing to press upon him, I put one foot behind, and he fell under me, with a horrible squelch, upon the sand; and dashing my hand against his forehead, I sprung up lightly on my feet.

Here the people repeated their clamours, which were echoed for a long space from side to side; while I proposed to the judges that if my rival was not yet satisfied, I would give him the other venture. But the Black was so far from being in plight for a third engagement, that he could not rise without help on either hand; and the prize being a fine turban with a diamond button, was put upon my head.

The competitors for the race then came from among the croud, being fifteen in number, lightly equipt for the purpose; and I also put on a thin canvas waistcoat that came close to my body.

In the front of the throne, a long pole was set up from whence we were to start; and another pole was erected on the further side, round which we were to run, and so return to the post from whence we set out.

We

190 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

We were all arranged in a line, and Ali himself was to give the word, when one of our fellows either thinking or pretending to think that the word was given, started away, the rest followed, and I was left alone, quietly standing by the post. Why do not you set out? said Ali; when your highness shall be pleased to give the word. Away, then! he cried, and away I sprung.

As I found that I was gathering them up very fast, I suspended my speed, and lingered behind the hindmost, till they had all turned the post, and extended in a long line before me. I then started away, and passed one, and then another, till, having passed them all, I left the foremost at a distance behind me, and seized the goal; whereon Ali himself gave a cry of admiration, which was answered from all sides by all his people.

I was then presented with a velvet tunic embroidered with gold; and some smaller matters were given to the two who came next to me in speed.

The candidates for the third prize then rose from the ground where they had sat to repose themselves; for they were the same persons who had been competitors in the race. A scarlet girdle was stretched along the grass, as a mark from whence

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 191

whence the rivals were to set off on their leap. And each of them took a run, till they came to the appointed limit, and then sprung forward with their utmost agility.

As this of all others, was the article of bodily exercise wherein I excelled, I stood by, as an unconcerned spectator, till the contest was over. I then measured with my eye the length they had passed. Then, taking two men, I set them in mid-space, and placing a pole upon their heads, I took a run, and throwing myself head foremost over the pole, I turned in the air, and alighted six inches beyond the furthest leap; whereupon I was presented with a collar adorned with gems of great lustre.

Ali then ordered two troops of his light horse to come forward. Accordingly they entered the pale, and, dividing, they retired to opposite sides of the lists. The populace then fell back and cleared the intermediate space, and the young officers set forward on a half gallop, at the head of their troops.

Never did I see such action, such horsemanship. The officers, as they rode swiftly forward, would toss their lances aloft and then catch them in mid-air; and again they would cast them to a distance
before

before them, and, stooping, take them from the ground in the midst of their speed.

The troops then met, as should seem, in mortal opposition; and breaking their frail lances against each other, they drew the wooden sabres, and each, passing his adversary, gave a back stroke to his neck, with such force and agility as was truly alarming. Their ranks then appeared to be broken on either part. And instantly forming themselves into little rhombs, or squares, or wedges, they fought and mixed together, as in a country dance, with the most regular confusion that ever was beheld.

This was justly delightful to all the spectators; and I regretted their departure, for the ridiculous entrance of a third pantomime.

While this droll was preparing, I received an order from Ali, to dress myself in the prizes which I had won, and to attend him.

I obeyed, and presented myself before him. What is your name, young man? David, so please your highness. Are you of Christ or of Mahomet, David? My will is with Christ, so please you; but, while I confess him with my lips, my whole life has denied him. Then, David,
if

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 193

if you will but forsake Christ, and turn to Mahomet, you shall be the Friend of Ali, and he will heap treasures and titles, and great honours upon you. Ah, my lord ! I cried out, though I hold my Christ but by a frail and feeble thread, yet I would not quit that thread for a chain of golden links, that should bind the whole wealth of the world to my possession. And why would your highness desire the service of a traitor ? He who proves a traitor to his God, so please you, can never prove true to any master.

Well, David, said he mildly, we may talk of these matters hereafter. In the mean time, before I do you any grace, I ought at least to do you justice. You have already received the rewards of your valour and your activity, but you have not yet received the reward of your obedience. You were the only one, brave David, who, at the risque of your own honour, attended on my word, and here I give you an earnest of the recompence that I intend you.

So saying, he presented me with a large and massive sabre, whose handle was studded with gems of great value. I received it on my knee, and he then continued, Ask me now, David, what further gift you demand, except your dis-

mission, and it shall be granted you to
a tenth of the treasure in my coffers.

When he had spoken, my eye was
caught by one of his retinue, and imme-
diately I recollected the features of the
pirate Barbar.

I instantly cast myself prostrate before
his throne, and cried aloud, Ah, generous
Ali! may God multiply to you treasures
and blessings a thousand fold! I ask none
of your treasures and possessions, O Ali!
I only ask the head of that traitor, the
head of Barbar; I ask but blood for
blood: let him restore to me my friend,
my brother, my lord Osmyn; he is a
murderer, a traitor, and such I will prove
him by night or by day, by sea or by
land; at any weapons, against any odds,
I will prove him a traitor.

While I spoke, thus impassioned, all
about appeared under the utmost conster-
nation; and Barbar trembled and turn-
ed pale, but did not dare to quit his
station.

Rise, David, said Ali, and tell me what
friend, what Osmyn thou dost mean? All
I know of him, my lord, is that his name
was Osmyn of Petra, and that he was
nephew to some great prince in this part
of the world.

Why,

I

Why,

Why, you dream, surely, David, replied the regent, Oslinyn of Petra was my own nephew; and he perished, with all his crew, by the hands of the English.

He did not perish by the hands of the English, I cried; the English were his preservers, his friends, his attendants, and he perished by the hands of his own countrymen, and more especially by the hands of this traitor Barbar.

Well, said Ali, we have not leisure, at present, to examine into the truth of these allegations; guards, take that Barbar into safe and close custody, till we are better informed touching the facts with which he is charged. Mean time do you, David, follow in my train, for you must take up your lodging with me, this night.

The palace, though it appeared one uniform edifice, was divided into two by an impassable barrier. The one was the occasional habitation of Ali and his attendants: and his wives, with their eunuchs, were lodged in the other, where it was impalement for any man, save Ali himself, to enter.

For three days and nights, after I entered his palace, though I was treated with an attention that gave me much un-

easiness, yet I had not the honour of being called to his presence.

At length I was conducted by a private door to his cabinet. My friend David, said he, what hast thou to tell me concerning my dear and brave nephew Osmyn? I then minutely, and at large, recited to him the particulars above related. And we shed many tears, that were mutually provoked by the tears of each other.

Having closed my narration, he cast his eyes down awhile, as in deep meditation; and raising them again, he said, the presumptions are strong, very strong against this man, and yet there is a possibility that he may be guiltless. And though Osmyn was my nephew, my blood, and almost my bowels, yet honour, humanity demands of us, David, that nine criminals should escape the punishment they deserve, rather than one innocent person should perish in his righteousness. But the great Alla may give us further lights in this business.

In about five days after a convict was to be gauched for the rape and murder of a free woman. He was to be thrown from the top of a high tower, from whose walls projected several sharp and shagged instruments, resembling hooks, scythes, tenters,

tenters, &c. at certain distances, some below others.

He fainted several times as he was carrying to execution; and then being in an agony, he said he had a matter of the highest consequence to impart to the great Ali, and prayed to be brought directly into his presence.

I was on the spot when we was led in, and, looking earnestly at him, recollected that he was the ruffian who had spit in my face, and given me a buffet when I entered Barbar's ship.

Wretch, cried the Dey, what hast thou to say to Ali? That I am guilty, answered the convict, of crimes more heinous and capital than that for which I am to suffer: of crimes that nearly concern yourself, O Ali, but which you shall never know, unless you swear to me, by Mahomet, to mitigate the manner of my death. I do swear it, said the regent, provided the discovery which you make shall be found to be of due import.

He then deposed, that on the night in which Osmyn disappeared, the captain, with ten confederated ruffians, of whom he was one, enter'd the prince's cabin, and having muffled the faces of him and his attendant, to prevent their crying out, bound them hand and foot, and

198 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

heaved them through the window into a boat that waited for them. That then getting into the frigate, they massacred the seven Moors to whose care she had been left, and rifling her of all the money and plate and valuables they could find, they sunk the frigate, with Osmyrn and his attendant in her, and then returned to their own ship.

Here Barbar was sent for, who was brought in chains, into the presence. But, as soon as he saw the face of the convict, without waiting to be confronted by his evidence, he rushed violently, with his head foremost, toward the opposite wall, and if a man who was at hand had not caught him by the chain, he would instantly have dashed his skull to shivers.

Ali hereupon, without further examination, ordered the head of the convict to be struck off in the morning, and Barbar to be impaled in the face of the people.

Never was joy like mine, on hearing this sentence pronounced against Barbar; and I rose early the next morning in order to have the pleasure of being at his execution.

He was so enfeebled by his panicks, that they were obliged to draw him on a sledg

fledge to the stake; and his countenance had all the impressions of death, despair and hell represented upon it.

This, however, did not affect me with any other sensation than of that delight which is naturally felt on the gratification of revenge, till the executioners, with unfeeling hearts and merry tauntings, began to take the wretch in hand. But when I saw them, with difficulty and great violence, thrusting the stake through his body, which they run up within side the spinal bone, and so out at the back of his neck, in order to avoid his bowels and keep him the longer in anguish; when I saw him writhing in agony, and heard his horrible roars and groanings, all my revenge was quickly turned into terror and compassion; his pangs and sufferings, as it seemed, were transferred to my own person, and, had I not turned away, I should have fainted on the spot.

The Dey from this time became extremely fond of me, and familiar with me. He allotted me an affluent pension, with slaves, horses and attendants. He said I should be to him in the place of a nephew, and of a son, and he called me by the name of David-Ofmyn.

Some time after, tidings were brought that Caled Amurath, of Rez, was making

mighty preparations to invade his dominions. We will more than meet him half way, cried the gallant Ali; perhaps we may even prevent his threatened expedition. He then summoned his forces from all quarters. I was present when he made a general muster of them. His foot were more formidable for their numbers than their discipline; but his horse were perfectly trained, and made a most brilliant appearance.

The day before he set out I threw myself at his feet. I will go with you, my master, I will go with you, I cried. I will not have any command or post of preference or honour; I only desire permission to fight by your side, that you may witness how greatly I shall dare in your cause; how ready I shall be to take, to my own bosom, all the weapons that shall be aimed at your bosom, my father!

No, David, he replied, my people know you are still a Christian. I could not refrain from shewing the love I have for you; and that might be matter of jealousy and discontent to my captains. I will leave you here a band of soldiers, with whom you are to encamp within sight of my palace, and to keep these walls from violence, and my women from pollution. But, while you are
their

their guardian, beware that you do not turn an invader, David! I would pardon you any thing but this; I would not pardon you the invasion of my bed, David-Osmyn! No, my Lord, I cried aloud, I cannot prove ungrateful. Though your women were as obvious to my walks as yonder pavement, and though adorned with more graces than their first mother in paradise, they should have no temptation for me, my master!

The next morning Ali began his march; and having escorted him a piece on his way, I returned to my charge.

That night, as I lay in my tent, I began to call myself to an account. David, said I to my soul, thou hast now gotten preferment, and riches, and honours; thou art, as it were, the second man in the realm, and all this people have thee in high estimation: but art thou the better or the happier man for all this, David? Far otherwise, far otherwise. O frail and vain heart! these gauds and these glories have taken hold upon thee, and they have drawn a painted veil between me and my God. To my chain, and my straw, and my nakedness! return me to them, O Lord! return me to my slavery, return me to my labours! I was not then, indeed, gaining conquests and

winning prizes; but I was near to obtaining *the prize of the high calling*. My body was not then adorned with gold and pearl; but my spirit rejoiced in *the pearl of mighty price!*

In about five weeks after, as I was taking, by moonlight, my evening's walk of meditation, on the marble that checkerboarded the pavement before the palace, Muley, an old black, and chief of the eunuchs of the seraglio, came up and accosted me. Osmyn, said he, taking a bundle from under his arm, I have here a present for you that would make proud the greatest emperor upon earth. It is a complete suit wrought purposely for you by the fingers of the Sultana, as also by the fingers of her fair and princely sisters. They have heard of your great achievements during the festival, and they send you this in reward.

So saying, he unfolded the robes to the moon. They were flowered with gold, pearl and gems of such a vivid lustre as reflected her beams with tenfold brightness.

And what is required of me, Muley, I demanded, in return for this inestimable honour and bounty? Nothing, said Muley, but a single hour's attendance, to give them a short sketch of your life and adventures.

adventures. Take back your presents, I cried, there is poison and death in them; I will not betray the trust that our master has reposed in me. Nay, said Muley, I affirm to you that there is no such intention. Our ladies are all women of the severest chastity. I will undertake to conduct, and reconduct you back in safety. Neither can our master be betrayed in any degree. They all live together, they love like sisters, and no one keeps a secret from the other. However, they desired me to tell you that, if you are of a fearful temper, they will not insist on the favour so much expected.

Here I felt myself piqued: No, Muley, I cried, I am no coward. I can dare all honest dangers. I will attend you. But I will not stay, Muley. I will let your ladies know, that, in the cause of honour and virtue, I can resist all temptations.

I then called a distant slave, who waited my orders, and giving him the bundle, desired him to lay it within my tent. Where now, Muley? said I. I will shew you, said Muley.

He then led me to a large bucket, wherein water was accustomed to be raised, by pulleys, to the balcony, and there to be

be emptied into vessels that stood upon the leads. You must not enter any door of the lower story, said Muley; for there our domestics inhabit, and might, probably, observe you. But, if you get into this bucket, in a minute or two after I will raise you by the pulleys, and take you gently in.

Muley then went from me, and was admitted, on striking at a distant door; while I stood by the bucket, and observing it's first motion, jumped in and was conveyed to the top of the palace. Muley there received me in darkness and silence, and, taking me by the hand, led me down by a few steps into a narrow apartment, that was scarce enlightened by the glimmering lamp. He there left me again, giving me only a whispering promise that he would quickly return. I waited for him long, however, under great impatience of getting speedily back again. At length he came, and, taking me by the hand, without speaking a word, he led me through a long and dark entry, till coming to a folding door, he touched a spring, whereupon the door flew open on either side, and threw a sudden blaze upon my dazzled eyes.

The

The saloon upon which it opened, was profusely illuminated, and most sumptuously furnished; but my attention was quickly called from such inferior objects. In the midst a board was covered with an elegant collation. Around it were placed a great number of small sophas; and behind each sofa stood a lady richly adorned, but veiled from the head to the waist.

Again Muley led me to the further end, while I made a low obeisance as I passed the company. He then compelled me to sit, where, by a small turn of my head, I could have a full prospect of each fair-one at table. Then, as by one motion, they were all instantly seated; and again, as by one motion, they all instantly threw up their veils, and I had like to have fallen backward with the suddenness of the lustre that flashed upon my spirit.

All the ladies smiled, and seemed delighted at my astonishment. The Sultana Adelaide, sat nearest to me, on the right; and was no way distinguished from her sisters, but by a small coronet of feathered diamonds, that was inserted in her lovely locks. Osmyn, said she, you seem something surprized; were you never in a seraglio before? Have you no seraglios

206 THE FOOL OF QUALITY

in your country, Osmyn? No, Madam, I replied, we have no seraglio in our country; but sure, no seraglio, upon earth, ever produced such and so many beauties as now strike my eyes. Heaven alone can exhibit such a constellation of luminaries.

Would you not wish then, said Adelaide, to have such a seraglio of your own? No, Madam, I answered; without love, in my judgment, there can be no true enjoyment; if ever I love, it can be but the one object, and her I shall love with my whole heart; true love will admit of no division. Here she looked at me with a tenderness that sunk into my soul, and taking out her handkerchief, she wiped away a swelling tear.

Another lady then demanded if we had not a woman market, and if they were not slaves in my country as they were here? No, Madam, I replied, our fair-ones there are not the subjects of merchandize, but the objects of admiration. No woman in England can be bound to any lover, save by her own affections. There it is death for any man to have more than one wife, and that after a suit, perhaps, of several years. A lady there, of equal beauties to the least excellent in company, would be followed by
hundreds

hundreds of humble and sighing adorers. In England our actions are as free as our hearts; and the sensibilities of mutual love, between those of the sexes who feel that tender and enchanting passion, constitute the principal happiness of which life is capable.

Happy Englishwomen, happy Englishwomen! was echoed all around.

Alas, cried the lovely Adelaide, how very different is our fate! we are sold, like servile brutes, to any brute of a master. We neither love, nor are beloved; as you now have convinced me, Osmyn. We are subjected to vile desires, which we at once detest and suffer; and, when those desires are gratified, we are cast away as common lumber, to make room for some new comer. Even high as I sit here, the favoured Sultana of my Lord, I may to-morrow be appointed to the meanest offices of his household. This, surely, cannot be a marriage; for, as you have intimated, Osmyn, and as I feel in my own soul, marriage can only consist in an union of hearts. Love cannot be bought or sold; it is of too precious a nature; nothing can purchase, nothing compensate, save its value in love alone.

Here they pressed me to tell them my story; and here I confess, to my shame, that,

that, however vile I appeared in my own eyes, I was ambitious of appearing as honourable and deserving as possible in the eyes of the fair Adelaide. I therefore suppressed what was black, glossed over what was offensive, and enlarged on every thing that I deemed advantageous in my own character.

The night was far spent, by the time I concluded; and the Sultana arising, proposed to shew me the curiosities of an adjoining cabinet. I accordingly attended her, and was astonished at the lustre, the richness, and profusion of the jewels, as well as at the miracles of art that she displayed before my eyes.

On our return we perceived that our company had absconded. Adelaide grew all crimson, and cast down her eyes. I also, was confused, my heart began to throb, and I looked about for some pretence to make a quick escape. But — but — In short, Gentlemen, neither my resolutions, nor religion, nor honour, nor gratitude were of any avail against such a temptation; they fell together an easy victim to the all-conquering Adelaide.

Adelaide was the first to press my retreat. It was not yet day. I found Mulley in waiting. We came by the way we went,

went, I stepped into the bucket, and he let me gently down.

As I approached the pavement, I felt a hand behind that seized me violently by the shoulder. I sprung out, and, seizing the wretch by the throat, would instantly have plunged my poniard into his bosom; but some power as suddenly arrested my arm, and said to my heart, beware that thou add not murder to adultery, David!

While I hesitated, a number rushed upon me unaware, they griped me by each arm, and, wresting the poniard from me, they bound my hands behind, and led me to the cells of the Imams that stood something aloof from one end of the palace.

As soon as they had brought lights, what, Osmyn! exclaimed their chief, can this be our renowned Osmyn? Is it thus that you repay the favours of your generous and kind master? You are a Christian, cried another; has your Christ then taught you to betray the confidence and trust that is reposed in you? This was a home stab? it went through my heart; but I stood in a shamefaced fullness, and opened not my lips.

Here they went apart, and, having consulted awhile, returned. Osmyn, said their

their chief, you are a brave and a wonderful man, and it is a pity to lose you. Your secret is yet with us; and, we swear to you, by our holy prophet, and by the terrible Alha, that if you perform the single condition we enjoin, we will bury what we know, in a depth below the grave, and we will recommend you to the love of Ali, and the acclamations of all the people, and we will have you loaded with preferments, and riches, and honours. Name it quickly, I cried, whatever it may be, at the risque, at the loss of my life, I will perform it. It is, said he, no more than to abjure Christ, and to confess Mahomet, whose priests we are, and all the blessings of his paradise shall be showered down upon you.

Here I gave a deep groan; and casting down my head, and shedding a silent tear, without daring to lift my thoughts to heaven; No, no, I cried, though Christ is nothing to me, though I have no interest in him; though he spurns and has rejected me, for time, and for eternity: though I have daily denied him by every action of my life; yet my tongue shall never deny him. In poverty and nakedness, in dangers and in dungeons, in death here, and in hell hereafter, my mouth shall confess him.

Here they went apart again, and, returning, told me that I should have two days to deliberate on their proposal; but that, if I did not comply, I should be impaled alive on the third morning, with all the additional tortures that art could invent.

They then put me into a covered kind of a waggon and conveyed me to Algiers, where I was cast into a noisome dungeon, bolted down to the ground with irons, sustained with coarse bread and water, and not allowed a ray of light to divert my thoughts from the darkness and horrors of my situation.

Mean time I endeavoured to reinforce my resolution, by repeating to myself the sacred promise, where Christ says, *Who-so-ever will confess me upon earth, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven.* Mine, indeed, said I, is but a verbal confession; but even that, with what I am about to suffer for his sake, may serve to make me less criminal, if not acceptable, in his sight.

I then longed to be brought to the test, while I shuddered at the thoughts of it. At length the day arrived. The Imams came, and once more repeated the question; but I still persisted, though in terms that were scarcely intelligible, for
 Here my

my tongue cleaved with terror to the roof of my mouth.

They then stripped me to these drawers, out of which also they took my money, with other valuables, and every thing except this insignificant walnut, and, having tied me to a sledge, I was dragged to the place of execution.

The chief Imam once more asked if I would renounce the son of David? but I made him no answer, for I was unable to speak. I had seen the preparations; the stake in the hands of the executioners; the fires kindled about me, with horrid instruments ready to be put therein, for the tearing of my frying and quivering flesh from the bones.

Could I then have had the confidence to have turned my soul to God, and to have besought his assistance in that trying and terrible hour, I make no question but he would have given me strength from on high, to defy all that man or devils could do unto me; and I might now, in the regions of his bounty and his blessedness, have been pouring forth my existence, in the grateful and astonishing sense of his mercy to such a sinner.

But when I reflected of the writhings of Barbar, the bare sight of which my spirit was not able to support; when I

saw

saw such an apparatus of additional torments; and when they took me in hand, for instant execution, I utterly lost my senses; I shrunk inward with fear, my hairs stood an end with horror; my tongue found sudden utterance, and I cried, stay, stay, I will say, I will do whatever you enjoin.

The Imam then began to pronounce a form of renunciation, which he ordered me to repeat after him; but I was so panting and breathless, that they were obliged to get a cordial for me to keep me from swooning.

As soon as my spirits were something restored, the Imam again began his impious ceremony, and I make no question but I should have gone through it, however abhorrent to my soul, but, in that instant, we heard distant shouts and cries, as of many people; the sound of the clamours drew nearer and nearer; and, soon after, we saw numbers hurrying to and from the city. Their words became now, as distinct as they were audible; Ali is slain, Ali is slain! was all the cry; and Amurath comes in full march upon us.

Here all turned suddenly from me, and, flying several ways, left me unbound and alone, sitting close by the stake.

214 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

stake. Seeing this, I began to recover from the fearful and faint condition in which I was; and, rising, I made the best of my way to the port. There I saw a long boat just about to set off with a number of fellows, much in my own plight, and, taking a run, I sprung from the beach into the midst of them.

A man then demanded, in English, if I was one of the ransomed? Yes, ransomed, ransomed, I cried, wonderfully ransomed indeed; whereupon, without further question, they set up their sail, and, in about two hours, we reached the ship which the consul had appointed to take them.

For the remainder of that day, I continued in a state that is hard to be conceived. My head and stomach, at times, were disordered by sick fits, and my soul hovered in an astonished and fearful kind of doze, as one not rightly awakened from a dream of horror.

Toward evening I threw myself down in the hold, and sunk into a state of utter oblivion, as I had not slept for the three foregoing nights and days.

The day following I found my body something refreshed, but the situation of my mind was like that of a disturbed and tumbling sea after a raging storm. I
looked

looked around for comfort, but no comfort was near; I looked afar off for hope, but no hope came in prospect. The sense of existence became a misery under which I was not able to bear up; and, could I have had my wish, creation would again have been uncreated.

During the whole of our voyage I continued, very nearly, in this distemper of spirit. For though at times I would enter into the frolics and jovial humours of the crew, yet my merriment at such seasons, was a merriment to madness; and I would again sink, precipitately, into a depth of despondence, whose darkness would admit no ray of consolation.

The tempter would then urge me, by dagger, or by drowning, or by any means, to get rid of a being, that only served to torment me: But again, the dread that I might not get rid of that being, and that death might plunge me into a perpetuity of those pangs in which I saw the wretched Barbar agonizing, this deterred me from hastening the day of my horrid doom, and so I waited in a gloomy and *fearful looking out for judgment.*

I would then call myself, at dead of night, before that terrible judgment. Thou fiend David, I would say, wherefore art thou sunk in guilt above all that
 looked
 ever

216 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

ever were guilty? It was thy fortune to get three good and kind masters, good and kind above thy wants, and even up to thy wishes; and all these thou hast deceived, thou hast spoiled and betrayed them. Even the Master of all masters, the Master who was my freedom in the midst of my captivity, I was on the brink of denying the Jesus also; nay, I did reject, I did deny him, I promised, I engaged, to reject and deny him; and he will reject thee; through time, and through eternity, he will deny thee, David!

One evening a fearful tempest arose; and, while most of the crew gave some of their little matters to the providore for liquors, and fat, drowning the sense of danger, and profanely carousing, at one end of the ship; my companions, who are present, were praying or singing glory to God in the other. Both parties invited me to join them, but I refused to be partaker with either; for I could not abet in others that wickedness which I condemned and detested in myself; and I could not think of taking into my execrable mouth the sacred name of that Christ to whom I had so lately turned a false apostate. In the mean time, I held myself as the refugee Jonas, whose crimes brought perdition on all in the vessel;
and

and I was on the point of advising the mariners to cast me out.

At length the tempest abated, but my perturbations did not abate. I wished to repent, but I deemed myself past the possibility of repentance; and thus I continued in a state of dissatisfaction and enmity against myself, against my God, against man, and woman kind.

When the constables entered, and, by the order of Sir Thomas, laid hold on such a number of my late associates; though I thought that I did not care what became of me, yet nature began to re-assert her rights; I trembled and turned exceeding pale, as I suppose; all my crimes came rushing together into my memory; I imagined that they were exposed before your eyes also; and I expected each moment, to be seized, like my fellow culprits, and thrown into a dungeon. But, when I found that, instead of punishment, you proposed to load me with your bounties, all my sins appeared to me the more exceedingly sinful; your goodness came, in a heap, upon the head of my own guilt; and I fell prostrate at your feet, as under the weight of a mountain.

As soon as he had closed his story; take courage and comfort to you, David, I

218 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

cried. Your case is not near so desperate as your conscientious fears have formed it. Your error lay in trusting to your own sense of duty, and to the strength of your own powers for resisting temptation; and the best man that ever breathed, with no better a dependance, must inevitably have fallen, as you did, David. You now know your own weakness; you are taught by repeated experience, that, in or of yourself, you no more can stand against the enemies of your soul, when they assail you, than a tree severed from its root, and barely set on end, can stand the assaults of a coming tempest. Keep therefore to your root, David. Never dare, in your own strength, to oppose yourself to a reed. Apply to the rock, my friend, from whence you were hewn. Cling to him, repose upon him, put your whole confidence in him; and then your weakness shall become stronger than an army with banners; and neither life nor death, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

While I spoke, his eyes began to glisten, the cloud of his countenance cleared, his aspect assumed a chearful serenity, he could scarce have been known for the same

same person; and he cried, I will, I will, office more seek to my God; do you, my Master, pray him to permit my approach; and in life, or in death, I never will let go my hold of him any more. He then would again have cast himself at my feet, but I hastened to prevent him.

David, said I, I am going to France, and before I set out, I shall be greatly pleased to see you in some decent way of livelihood. Now, instead of the twenty pounds of which you held yourself so unworthy, here are two hundred to make a kind of beginning for you, and I should be glad to know the use you propose to make of this money.

In the first place, Sir, said he, I will refund, to my two masters, all the money of which I defrauded them, with full or double interest, amounting, as I suppose, to seventy or eighty pounds. And, in the next place, I will return to your honour every penny of the remainder; for indeed you shall not persuade me to trust myself with it. In my present way of thinking, it would be of no more use to me than the stones or dirt of the street. My state of slavery and labour was the only state of happiness that I have known since my birth; and I dread, I shudder at the apprehension of affluence. I am already but

too rich, in having my liberty. I am now in a free country, and, therefore, Lord of my own earnings. Matter of labour is but matter of play to me. The pay of a porter, on the spot where I am, will be too much of opulence; it will give me a further sufficiency to supply the wants of the needy, and the cravings of the beggar.

My good David, my beloved penitent, said the worthy Sir Thomas, and so saying he took him most cordially by the hand, how came you by that same walnut, the only remnant of all your treasures, which you called insignificant, and have yet retained to this day? You are as Pharaoh to his chief butler, Sir, said David, you bring my faults fully into the remembrance of your servant.

While the Sultana, as I told you, was shewing and displaying to me the treasures of her cabinet, she desired me to take thereout whatever I held most rare or most estimable. But, as my covetous fit was not then upon me, I turned my eye on a few walnuts that I saw in a corner, and taking one of them, said, that I would keep it for her sake. Swear to me then, she cried, that you will never break or open it, till you get into your own country. This was an easy condition, and I instantly complied with it.

Did

Did you love the Sultana, David? Yes, Sir, to excess, as I am also persuaded that she loved me; and we vowed to intermarry, if ever it should be our fortune to regain our liberty; and, bound or free, never to marry another.

Let me look at your walnut, David, said Sir Thomas, you are now under no further injunction concerning it. Do not break it, I beseech you, then, Sir, said David, because I intend never to part with it. I will not break it, David, I will only open it with my knife, and a little matter of isinglass may soon repair the breach.

Sir Thomas then took the walnut, and having poised it for some time in his hand; I will give you a hundred guineas, David, said he, for your hazard of what this shell contains. I would take a hundred pence, Sir, said David, if I was inclined to take your money without giving value. Sir Thomas then took his knife, and, dividing the shell with the utmost caution, I have a strong fancy, David, said he, that I must soon raise the market; and instantly produced a diamond of the first water and magnitude.

We all started back and looked astonished; and David was the only person in company who, neither by word or look,

expressed the smallest joy or satisfaction on the occasion.

Sir Thomas, who was a jeweller, having inspected the stone awhile with much delight and admiration, Mr. David, said he, I would offer you seventeen hundred pieces for this diamond, if I did not think my offer considerably under the value, but I shall be a better judge when I have put it in the scales. Keep it, keep it, Sir, cried David, and heartily welcome, return me only the shell, it is all I will accept of. Then, turning to me a pale and alarmed aspect, Ah! Sir, said he, this is questionless another device of the tempter, I fear that I am not to get quit of my old associate so soon as I looked for. I do not think with you, David, in this matter, I replied. I rather conceive that Providence hath sent you this treasure at a time that he sees you will make a worthy use of it. Oh, Sir, he cried, if it shall ever again be my case to fall off from my God, I shall certainly run mad, or make away with myself. Why so, David? said I. You must not expect, all on a sudden, to jump into a sinless state. Such a state is only for those who have already *fought the good fight*, who have *finished their course*, who have *kept the faith*. Such a state is only for those in whom

whom the babe of Bethlehem is not only conceived, but grown up and become mature: These indeed cannot sin, but run, with a joyful and free will, into all sorts of goodness, as a stream is prone to run to it's kindred and parent ocean. But as for such as you and I, brother David, we must be content to struggle on, and to fall and rise by turns. And though we should fall an hundred times a day, yea and be sore wounded also, my David, yet we should not despond, but turn as often to our helper in total diffidence of ourselves, and full confidence in his mightiness. For he is almighty to lift us up whenever he thinks good, and the balm of Calvary is better than the balm of Gilead, to heal all our woundings.

I will tell you another secret, David, which I learned from a saint who is now in heaven. That the humbling state of frequent and conscious lapses is more eligible, and tending to higher blessedness for man, than the firmness and rectitude of an unfallen angel, because it saps self-confidence and creaturely dependance, and throws one wholly on the base that pillars up eternity.

Here he caught at my hand, and pressing his lips upon it, what shall I render

you,

K 4

you, my master, what shall I render you, he cried, for the peace and comfort which you have shed abroad through my bosom? I may now draw near to the throne of compassion, heavy laden with all my sins, that is to say, with all myself; and I will trust to free mercy for removing the burden, and to free grace alone for any good that shall ever be in me.

As it now grew late, we agreed that Sir Thomas should take David home in his own coach, and that I should take Thomas with me in a hackney; and I gave their remaining comrades an order for a hundred and fifty guineas *per* man.

When we were just upon separating, Thomas caught David about the neck. O my dear David, said he, I shall surely never dare to judge any man again; for I held you to be a very reprobate, when you were, fifty times over, a better man than myself. Hereupon I wished Sir Thomas and David a good night, and making Tirlah and Thomas go into the coach with me, went directly home.

As I entered the house Mrs. Tirrel met me with a sudden joy in her countenance. My dear Sir, she cried, I began to be in trouble about you; I have kept supper back this long time. Then, said I, let us have it as soon as you please;
for

for I have here brought a dear friend home with me.

I placed the twins directly opposite to each other at table, and I made Tirlah and young James sit down along with us.

While I was pleasingly employed in observing the mutual emotions of the brother and sister, they looked eagerly at each other, they both changed countenance, and neither of them offered to taste a bit. Mr. Thomas, said I, why do not you eat? Thomas! Thomas! cried the sister, in a quick and passionate accent; it may be — it may be — O! — my brother!

So saying, she gave a jump which, for the world, she could not have done at any other time. Over tumbled the table, meat, dishes, and plates; while she caught and clung about her brother, without casting a thought away upon the ruins that she had wrought. O my Tommy, O my Nelly! my Tommy, my Nelly! was all that was uttered in the midst of their caresses. They saw no one but each other; they heard no one but each other; and I would gladly lose or give a thousand suppers, to be feasted as I was at that season.

When Mr. Clinton came to this part of his story, a messenger entered in fear-

ful haste, and delivered a letter to Lady Maitland. As soon as she had run it over, my dearest Sir, she cried, I must leave you this instant. I lately made you an offer of a hundred thousand pounds, and now I know not that I have so many shillings upon earth. I am here informed that the trustee of all my affairs has absconded and made his escape to France; but I must hurry to town, and enquire into this business. So saying, she courtesied and suddenly withdrew, without giving her cousin time to make a tender of his services.

The next morning Mr. Clinton ordered his chariot to the door, and hastened to attend her ladyship at her house in London; but there he was told that she had set out for Dover about an hour before, and he returned much dejected and grieved on her account.

In about three weeks after Mr. Clement, with his young pupil, came home, quite lightened of the money they had taken abroad. Mr. Fenton, for so we shall call him again, gave Clement a friendly embrace, and took Harry to his caresses as though he had returned from a long and dangerous voyage.

Well, Clement, said Mr. Fenton, what account have you to give us of your expedition?

petition? An account, Sir, that would be extremely displeasing to any man living except yourself, in short our young Gentleman, here, has plunged you above a thousand pounds in debt, over the large sums that we carried with us. I hope the objects were worthy, said Mr. Fenton; wonderfully worthy, indeed, Sir; I never saw such tender and affecting scenes. Then I shall be overpaid and enriched by the narration.

Here Harry inquired impatiently for Mrs. Clement and his friend Ned, and being told that they were on a visit to the widow Neighbourly, he took a hasty leave for the present, and away he flew to embrace them.

As soon as he was gone, Sir, said Mr. Clement, I cannot think that there is, in the world, such another boy as your's. I will leave to himself the detail of our adventures in the several prisons; they had such an effect on his heart, that they cannot but have made a deep impression on his memory; so I shall only tell you of what happened in our way to London.

As we were chatting and walking leisurely along the road, a poor man before us happened to drop in a fit of the falling-sickness. When Harry saw the writhings and convulsions in which he lay, he turned
pale

pale and looked greatly frightened, and seizing me under the arm, he cried, come, come away! and hurried me off as fast as he could. But we had not gone far till his pace began to abate, and stopping and hesitating, let us turn, let us turn, Mr. Clement, he cried, let us go back again and help the poor man! We then returned hastily, and, raising his head, we kept him from bruising it against the ground. I then forced open his clenched hands, and having chafed the palms awhile, he began to recover, and soon came to himself. Mean while Harry's fright was not yet quite over. He seemed willing to get away from the object of his terror, and, putting his hand in his pocket, and giving him all the silver he had, he wished him better health, and away we went.

We had not gone above half a mile further when I saw a little girl, in a field on the right hand, endeavouring to drive a cow through a small gate into the road, in order to be milked, as I suppose, by her mother; but the cow kicked up her heels and proved wanton and refractory, and ran hither and thither, and would not be guided. The poor child then set up a cry of as bitter distress as if all that was valuable in the world was going

to ruin. Harry gave a ready ear to the sound of lamentation, and seeing the plight the poor thing was in, he suddenly crossed the road, above ankle deep in dirt, and, leaping the ditch, he proved nimbler than the cow, and, driving her through the pass, he turned her into the way that the child would have her go.

That morning indeed, was to Harry a morning of petty adventures. By the time that we approached the suburbs, we had nearly overtaken a grown girl who carried a basket of eggs on her head. A great lubberly boy, just then, passed us by at a smart pace, and tripping up to the girl, gave the basket a tip with his hand, and dashed all the eggs into a mash against a stony part of the road, and again taking to his heels, run on as before. Immediately Harry's indignation was kindled, and, setting out at top speed, he soon overtook him, and gave him several smart strokes with his little cane across the shoulders. The fellow then turned upon Harry and gave him a furious blow with his fist over the head, while I hastened to his relief, as the other appeared quite an overmatch for him. But, before I arrived, our hero had put a quick end to the combat, for springing from

from the ground, he darted his head full into the nose and mouth of his adversary, who instantly roared out, and, seeing his own blood come pouring down, he once more took to flight, while Harry continued to press upon him, and belaboured him at pleasure, till he judged that he had beaten him to the full value of the eggs.

Mean while the poor girl, wholly unmindful of what passed, remained wailing and wringing her hands over the wreck of her merchandise. The voice of a syren could not so powerfully have attracted and recalled Harry from the length he had gone; he returned with speed to her, and I followed. My poor girl, says he, where were you going with those eggs? To market, master, says she; and what did you expect to get for them? About five shillings, Sir, and I had promised my Daddy and Mammy to lay it out in shoes and stockings for my little brothers and sisters; and so I must now bear all the blame of the poor things going barefoot. Here she again set up her wailings, and her tears poured down afresh.

Harry then desired me to lend him ten shillings, and, turning to the mourner, hold out your two hands, my poor girl, he

he cried. Then, putting five shillings into each hand, here is the payment for your eggs, said he; and here are five shillings more, though I fear it is too little to pay you for all the tears they cost you.

Never did I see so sudden, so great a change in any countenance. Surprize, gratitude, extacy flashed from her eyes, and gave a joyous flush to her whole aspect. She hurried her money into her bosom, and dropping on her knees in the dirt, and seizing hold of Harry's hand, she squeezed and kissed it repeatedly, without being able to utter a word. While Harry's eyes began to fill, and endeavouring to disengage himself, he made off as fast as he could, from such thanks as he thought he had no way deserved.

This, Sir, was the last of our adventures going to London. But had you seen us on our return, about two hours ago, you would have wondered at the mirey plight into which we were put by helping passengers up with their bundles that had tumbled into the dirt; or by assisting to raise cattle that had fallen under their carriages; for Master Harry would compel me to be as busy, and active, in matters of charity, as himself.

However,

However, Sir, I am to tell you, that Master Harry, with all his excellencies of person, heart, and understanding, will be accounted a mere idiot, among people of distinction, if he is not permitted to enter into some of the fashionable foibles and fashionable vices of the age.

We were taking a walk in the mall, when we were met by the Earl of Mansfield, who expressed great joy at seeing Master Harry, his old acquaintance, as he called him, and he pressed us so earnestly to dinner that we could not, in good manners, refuse him.

There was a vast concourse of company, more especially of the little quality of both sexes, who came to pay their respects to young Lord Bottom and his sister the Lady Louisa.

Harry was received and saluted by Lady Mansfield and the young Lord, without any appearance of the old animosity. Some time after dinner a large packet of letters was brought in to the Earl, and, making his excuse to Harry alone, he rose from the table and retired to his closet.

Lord Bottom and his sister then led the young males and females to an adjoining apartment, where several card-tables were laid; and I began to tremble for the credit

dit of my pupil, on the occasion, as I knew him to be a novice in such matters.

In the mean time the remaining Ladies and Gentlemen divided into two or three parties at ombre; and I sauntered about the room, admiring the prints of the Ariadne and the Aurora that were taken from Guido, as also some capital paintings that the Earl had brought from Italy.

I had spent above an hour in this pleasing amusement, and had nearly made the tour of the whole dining-room, when as I stood at a little distance behind my Lady's chair, seemingly inattentive to any thing that passed, Lord Bottom entered on tiptoe, and tripping up to his mother, and tittering and whispering in her ear, what do you think Mamma, said he; sure Master Fenton is a fool, a downright fool upon my honour. He does not know a single card in the whole pack, he does not know the difference between the ace of hearts and the nine of clubs. I do not think either that he knows any thing of the difference or value of coin; for, as we passed through the hall to-day, a beggar asked for a halfpenny, and I saw him slip a shilling into his hand. Indeed, Mamma, he is the greatest fool that ever I knew; and yet, poor fellow, he

234 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

he does not seem to know anything of the matter himself. During this oration of Lord Bottom, on the virtues of his new friend, I felt my whole body glow and tingle with concern; and, soon after, Harry entered with the rest of the small quality. Master Fenton, cries my Lady, I beg to speak with you. Do not you know the cards, my dear? No, indeed, Madam. Can not you play at dice? No, Madam. Can you play at draughts or chess? Not at all, Madam, why then, my dear, I must tell you, that all your father's fortune will never introduce you among people of any breeding, or of any fashion. Can you play at no kind of game, Master Harry? A little at fox and geese, Madam; and pray, my dear, said my Lady, smiling, which of the parties do you espouse? The part of the geese, Madam, I thought as much, pertly cried out my Lord Bottom, whereupon a loud laugh was echoed through the room.

Here my Lady chid the company, and calling Harry to her again, for he had gone something aloof, Tell me, I pray you, said she, why you espouse the part of the geese? Because, Madam, I always wish that simplicity should get the better of fraud and cunning.

bio.I

The

to The Countess here looked astonished, and having gazed a while at him, and caught and kissed him eagerly; You are a noble fellow, she cried, and all must be fools or mad that shall ever take you for the one or the other.

The elder gentry here laid their cards aside, and desired the young ones to set about some play. Lady Louisa proposed draw-gloves, or questions and commands, and to it they went.

Among the females was one Miss Uppish, sole heiress to a vast fortune. Though her person was deformed, her face was the very picture of confident disdain; and scarce any one could speak to her, or look at her, without being told of the contempt she had for them, by the side-glance of her eye, the writhing of her neck, and tossing up of her head.

In the course of the play, our Harry was commanded to put the candle into the hands of Miss Uppish, and then to kiss the candlestick, which command he obeyed literally, by giving her the candle and kissing the candlestick which he held in his own hand.

Hereupon a great shout was set up in the young assembly, and, O, the fool, the senseless creature, the fool, the fool, the fool, was repeated throughout; while

Lord

236 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

Lord Bottom laughed, and danced about in the impatience of his joy.

I was amazed that Harry's countenance seemed no way disconcerted by all this ridicule. At length Lady Mansfield called him to her. How, my dear, could you be guilty of such an error, she said; did not you know that, when you gave the candle into the hand of the young Lady, she became the candlestick, and it was her you should have kissed. Harry then approached to her Ladyship's ear, and, in a pretty loud whisper, said, I did not like the metal, Madam, that the candlestick was made of. Again Lady Mansfield looked surprized, and said, you are a sly rogue, a very sly rogue, upon my honour, and have sense enough to dupe the wisest of us all.

Jemmy Bottom, cried my Lady, aloud, come here! I cannot but tell you, Jemmy, that you have behaved yourself extremely ill to your young friend here, who might have improved you by his example as much as he has honoured you by his visit. I must further tell you, Jemmy Bottom, that, whenever you pique yourself on degrading Master Fenton, you only pride in your own abasement, and glory in your shame. Hereupon, I got up and, leaving our compliments for
the

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 237

the Earl, I carried off my young charge, for fear of our falling into any further disgrace.

While Harry is abroad, said Mr. Fenton, be pleased to give me a general sketch of the manner in which you disposed of your money. In the first place, Sir, answered Clement, you will find, by this list, that, for little more than the five hundred pounds allotted, we released ninety-five prisoners, whose debts amounted from forty shillings to about twelve pounds *per* man. These, in general, had been journeymen weavers, or other tradesmen; and, as they wanted means or encouragement for exercising their respective occupations in gaol, they subsisted on the pence which they got by begging at the grates, or on their dividends of occasional sums, which were sent for their relief by charitable individuals. Nearly all of them were half starved; and more than half naked, and yet they could hardly be said to excite compassion, as they appeared so chearful and unfeeling of their own wretchedness. Neither was there one of them of whose story I could learn a single circumstance worth reciting.

Some, however, were of a quality much superior to this class. Among others, there were a French Marquis and a German

man Count; the Count had been put under arrest by his caterer, and the Marquis by his taylor, so that something less than fifty pounds set them both at liberty.

While the keeper of the Fleet Prison was making out a list for us of the principal debtors, Harry and I took a turn about the court, and observed two fellows in liveries, bearing several smoking covers up the stone stairs, to a front dining room. This surprized me, and gave me the curiosity to enquire what prisoner it could be who lived in so expensive and superb a manner. Sir, said the under keeper, there are few men now at liberty wealthier than this Gentleman, who has done us the honour to set up his staff of rest in our house. His name is Sink. He is an attorney, and an old batchelor, turned of sixty years of age. He is in for several fums, amounting to upward of nine thousand pounds, and he is reputed to be worth many times that money.

During the last twenty years he behaved himself with the strictest probity toward all men, and with the strictest appearance of piety toward God. In the dark, in frost and snow, and all inclemencies of weather, he never missed attending morning

morning service at church. He was equally solicitous to be at evening prayer; and, whatever company he chanced to have with him, or how important so ever the business in which he was engaged, the moment he heard the bell ring, he would huddle up his papers and break away without ceremony. He was eager in his enquiries to know where the sacrament was soonest to be administered, and he never missed receiving it, at least, once in the week. Whenever he heard any profaneness or obscenity in the streets, he would stop to reprove and expostulate with the offender. In short, he so perfectly counterfeited, or took off, as they call it, the real Christian, that many looked to see him, like Enoch or Elijah, taken alive into heaven.

This perpetual parade of sanctity gave him such an eclat and unmeasurable credit, that he was left trustee and executor in a multitude of wills; and numbers also deposited their substance in his hands, in order to be laid out at interest on securities, and so forth.

Three months since, about the dawning, as his butcher happened to pass by his door, he heard it open, and, turning saw a number of porters come out heavy laden. This gave him a kind of suspicion.

He

He let them all pass, and walking softly after, he stepped up to the hindmost and offered him half a crown on condition of his telling him where they were carrying those parcels. That I will, said the porter, for the secret, if such it is, is nothing to me, you know. In short, we are carrying them to the wharf to be put on board a boat that waits to take them in.

The butcher said no more, but hurried away to the baker, and, as they both run to the office, they met the brewer by the way. They sued out their respective writs, and, taking a constable with them, they seized on good Mr. Sink as he was stepping into a coach and six to make the best of his way to Dover. He would have paid them their money and discharged their actions on the spot; but here the Master in whom he trusted, happened to leave him in the lurch. As he had turned all his effects into money, and his money into paper, he had not cash about him wherewith to pay his instant creditors. So they hurried him to a sponging house; by which means the matter was blown, and action after action came pouring in upon him, before he had time to extricate himself.

When he found himself thus at bay, he cast aside his disguise, and set them all
at

at defiance. His creditors have since offered to accept ten shillings, and some of them five shillings in the pound; but he swears that he will never pay them a groat; for he is now as liberal of his oaths and impious execrations, as he was lately of his more impious profanation of gospel phrases. And thus he daily revels, in the sensual consumption of those wretches whom he hath so inhumanly defrauded, while hundreds of orphans and widows, and other miseries, perish for want of the sustenance, which one infernal appetite devours without remorse. Nay several of his creditors are, at this very time, famishing in this prison, while they see him feasting so lavishly upon their spoils.

My soul, cried Mr. Fenton, my very soul rises against this Dæmon. Can nothing be done to bring him to punishment? Our Legislators will surely interfere in such a crying exigence. Alas, Sir, said Clement, he was too knowing in his profession to leave any possibility of that. Every thing was secured beyond the reach of the law.

Indeed, continued Clement, I heartily wished, at the time, that the laws of the Grecians and Romans had been in force among us, where the debtor was given up

242 THE FOOL OF QUALITY,
to be set to labour, whipped or tortured
at the pleasure of the creditor.
God forbid, God forbid, exclaimed Mr.
Fenton.

When we see Mankind divided into the
rich and the *poor*, the *strong* and the
weak, the *sound* and the *sickly*, we are
apt to imagine, that *health*, *strength*, or
opulence, was given to those; and *infirmi-*
ty, *want*, or *weakness*, appointed to these;
as marks of the peculiar favour or dis-
favour of Providence.

God, however knows that there is no-
thing permanently good or evil in any
of these things. He sees that nothing is
a good but virtue, and that nothing is a
virtue, save some quality of benevolence.
On benevolence therefore he builds the
happiness of all his intelligent creatures;
and, in this, our mortal state, (our short
preparative for a long futurity) He has
ordained relative differences of *rich* and
poor, *strong* and *weak*, *sound* and *sickly*, &c.
to exercise us in the offices of that charity,
and those affections, which, reflecting and
reflected like mutual light and warmth,
can alone make our good to all eternity.

Benevolence produces and constitutes
the heaven or beatitude of God himself:
He is no other than an infinite and eter-
nal Good-Will. Benevolence must there-
fore,

fore, constitute the beatitude or heaven of all dependent beings, how ver infinitely diversified through several departments and subordinations, agreeable to the several natures and capacities of creatures.

God has appointed human *power* and human *wealth* as a ready and sufficient fund for human *want* and *weakness*; to which fund, therefore, they have as good a right to resort, as any other creditors have to respective trusts or deposits; for though poverty and weakness are not creditors by the laws of man, they are creditors by the eternal laws of nature and equity; and must, here or hereafter, bring their debtors to account.

Every man, when he becomes a member of this or that society, makes a deposit of three several sorts of trusts, that of his life, that of his liberty, and that of his property.

Now, as every man, in his separate or independent state, has, by nature, the absolute disposal of his property, he can convey the disposal thereof to society, as amply and absolutely as he was, in his separate right, intitled thereto.

This however, cannot be said of his life, or of his liberty. He has no manner of right to take away his own life; neither to depart from his own liberty:

He cannot, therefore, convey to others a right and authority which he has not in himself.

The question then occurs, by what right it is that the legislative and executive powers of community, appoint some persons to death, and others to imprisonment? My answer is short.

It is the right, perhaps the duty of every man, to defend his life, liberty, and property, and to kill or bind the attempters. This right he can, therefore, convey; and on such conveyance, it becomes the right and duty of the trustees of society to put to death, or imprison all who take away or attempt the life, liberty, or property of any of its members.

This right, however, extends to *criminal matters* only; and it does not yet appear to me upon what reason, or right rule, founded in nature or policy, the several societies of mankind have agreed to deliver up their members to slavery, to stripes, tortures, or imprisonment, for matters *merely civil*, such as *debts*.

Several of the states of Greece, though accounting the rest of the world as barbarians; and even the Roman republic, during the time of it's most boasted policy and freedom, gave up insolvent debtors

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 245

tors (without enquiring into the causes or occasions of such insolvency) as slaves, or absolute property into the hands of their creditors, to be sold at will, or put to labour, or starved, macerated or tortured, in order to give value in vengeance which they could not give in coin, or other equivalent commodities.

The Jewish or Mosaic law, though allowing sufficiently, as Christ says, for *the hardness of that peoples' hearts*, yet gave perfect enlargement to all Jews who were bondmen, and perfect remission to all Jews who were personal debtors, on every seventh or sabbatical year: and on every seventh sabbatical year, or Jubilee, all prisons were thrown open; all slaves though foreigners or aliens, set at liberty; and even the lands were enfranchised, however mortgaged, or labouring under debt and execution; that all things, animate or inanimate, might have an earnest of that immunity and perfect freedom which God originally intended, and keeps in store for his creatures.

The laws of Ægypt permitted no member to deprive the public of the life, liberty, or labour, of any other member, except he were a criminal, not fitting to live, or to be suffered to walk at large. In all cases of debtor and creditor, they,

246 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

equitably appointed value for value, as far as the substance of the debtor could reach; and, in case of insufficiency, the insolvent party was obliged to leave, in pledge, the mummies, or preserved bodies of his deceased ancestors, till, by industry or good fortune, either he, or his posterity, should be enabled to redeem them. A matter of refined, as well as charitable policy; as nothing was held more infamous among the Ægyptians, than their inability to produce the mummies of their forefathers.

The laws of Holland, by their late qualifications, seem to acknowledge the iniquity, or inadequateness, of depriving a man of the *possibility of earning*, merely because he has not an *immediate ability to pay*. Sensible, therefore, that all men are debtors to God, and reciprocally debtors and creditors to each other, they have ordained, that he who imprisons an insolvent debtor, shall pay the proper penalty, of his malevolence or indiscretion, by maintaining the party, from whom he takes the ability of maintaining himself.

It must be admitted, that, were our law less severe with respect to debtors, were people less afraid of a jail on failure of payment, there would be less credit,
and

and consequently less dealing, in this so wonderfully wealthy and trading a nation. But if our credit were less, should not our extravagance lessen also? Should we see such princely tables among people of the lower class; should so many liquors intoxicate a kingdom; should we see the value of a prince's ransom gorgeously attiring each of our fine ladies, if neither merchant, butcher, brewer, laceman, mercer, milliner, nor taylor would trust?

Many of our poor city dealers are yearly undone, with their families by crediting persons, who are *privileged not to pay*, or whose remoteness, or power, places them beyond the reach of the law.

When I was last at Paris, I had the honour to be introduced to Messieurs Thimble and Goose, two taylors of quality. In the course of conversation, it happened to turn, as usual, on the dullness of the times, the deadness of trade, and delays of payment. Says Monsieur Thimble, I had the misfortune to make interest for the new cloathing of the last regiments that were transported to Canada. But interest was again to be made for the payment; and, before that could be done, the officers

were shipped off, with greater value of my gold and silver on their backs, than I am sure, they carried of their own in their pockets. Ambition, cried Monsieur le Goose, ambition has brought me to the very brink of ruin: I scorned to work for any thing under the degree of nobility, and the nobility are a sort of people whom we can never set our eyes on, except at the time we are sitting on their clothes.

Before money became the medium of commerce, the simple business of the world was carried on by truck, or the commutation of one commodity for another. But when men consented to fix certain rateable values upon money, as a ready and portable equivalent for all sorts of effects, credit was consequently introduced, by the engagements of some, to pay so much money in lieu of such commodities, or to deliver such or such commodities on the advance of so much money; and states found it their interest to support such public credit, by enforcing the performance of said engagements.

By the common-law of England no person, except the king, could take the body of another in execution for debt; neither was this prerogative of the crown extended to the subject till the statute of Marlbridge,

Marlbridge, chapter 23, in the reign of Henry III.

Many contract debts through vanity, or intemperance; or borrow money, or take up goods, with the intention of thieves and robbers, never to make return. When such suffer they suffer deservedly in expiation of their guilt. But there are unavoidable damages by water by fire, the crush of power, oppressive landlords, and more oppressive law-suits, death of cattle, failure of crop, failure of payment in others, with thousands of such like casualties, whereby men may become bankrupts, and yet continue blameless. And, in all such cases, one would think, that the present ruin was sufficient calamity, without the exertion of law to make that ruin irreparable.

As all the members of a community are interested in the life, liberty, and labours of each other; he who puts the rigour of our laws in execution, by detaining an insolvent brother in gaol, is guilty of a fourfold injury; first, he robs the community of the labours of their brother; secondly, he robs his brother of all means of retrieving his shattered fortune; thirdly, he deprives himself of the possibility of payment; and, lastly,

he

256 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

he lays an unnecessary burden on the public, who, in charity, must maintain the member whom he, in his cruelty, confines.

However since the severity of law is such, that he, whose misfortunes have rendered him insolvent, must make *satisfaction* (for so the savages esteem it) (by surrendering his body to durance for life; it is surely incumbent on our Legislators and governors to make the condition of the unhappy sufferers as little grievous as may be.

But this most christian duty, this most humane of all cares is yet to come. When a debtor is delivered up into the phangs of his gaoler, he is consigned to absolute and arbitrary slavery; and woe be to the wretch whose poverty may not have left him a sop for Cerberus. How more than miserable must be the state of those unhappy men who are shut in from all possible redress or appeal against the despotic treatment of their savage keepers, whose hearts are habitually hardened to all sense of remorse, and whose ears are rendered callous by incessant groans.

We are credibly informed that it is usual, with such keepers, to amass considerable fortunes from the wrecks of the wretched; to squeeze them by exorbitant

tant charges and illicit demands, as grapes are squeezed in a wine-press, while one drop remains; and then to huddle them together into naked walls and windowless rooms; having got all they can, and nothing further to regard, save the return of their lifeless bodies to their creditors.

But tell me, continued Mr. Fenton, were there any prisoners of consideration among the confined debtors? A few, Sir, of note, and many who had been well to pass in the world. Among these, indeed, it was, that every scene and species of misery was displayed. There you might see, as you have said, numerous families of wretches, whose thin and tattered garments but ill defended their shivering bodies from the inclemency of elements, that blew through shattered windows, or came pouring from unstaunched roofs.

These people fared incomparably worse than those of the vulgar herd; for, being ashamed to beg at the grates, they had nothing to subsist on, save their scanty portion of such charities as happened to be sent in, from time to time, and this scarcely supplied them with a morsel of bread to support nature; while the recollection of their former affluence added sharp and bitter poignancy to the sense of their present

sent wants. — But here comes my pupil, he will be more particular on doenes with which his heart was so meltingly affected.

Harry then entered, with Mrs. Clement caressing him on the one side, and his old dependant Ned hanging about him on the other.

As soon as Clement and his Arabella had embraced, and that all were settled and seated: Well, Harry, said Mr. Fenton, will you favour us with some account of your expedition? Have you ever a pretty story for me, my Harry? Several stories, Sir, said Harry, that were sweet pretty stories when I heard them; but Mr. Clement had better tell them; they would be sadly bungled if they came through my hands, Dada. The company will make allowances, replied Mr. Fenton; let us have these stories in your own way, Harry, just as your memory may happen to serve you.

On the second day, Dada, as my tutor and I were walking in the court-yard of the Fleet Prison, who should I spy but my old Master, Mr. Vindex, walking, very sad, to and again by the wall. He was so pale and shabby, and so fallen away, that I did not rightly know him till I looked

looked at him very earnestly. My heart then began to soften and warm toward the poor man; for it told me that something very sorrowful must have happened before he could have been brought to that condition. So I went up to him, with a face, I believe, as melancholy as his own.

How do you do, good Mr. Vindex? said I. I should be glad to see you, if I did not see you look so sad. He then stared at me for some time, and, at length, remembering me, he looked concerned, and turned away to shun me; but I took him lovingly by the hand, and said, you must not leave me, Mr. Vindex; will not you know your old scholar, Harry Fenton? Yes, says he, casting down his mournful eyes, I know you now, Master; I know I used you basely, and I know why you are come; but reproach me and insult me as much as you please, all is welcome now, since I cannot lie lower till I am laid in the earth.

I do not mean to insult you; this tear will witness for me that I do not mean to insult you, my dear Mr. Vindex, and so I wiped my eye. Here are twenty guineas to put warm clothes upon you in this cold weather. Little and low as I

am myself; I will try to do something better for you, and so give me one kiss in token that we are friends.

The poor dear man then opened his broad eyes, in a wild stare upon me, with a look that was made up half of joy and half of shame. He then kneeled down, as I supposed, that I might reach to kiss him, and taking me into his arms, you are not born of woman, you are an angel, an angel, he cried; and so he fell a crying, and cried so sadly, that I could not, for my heart, but keep him company.

I did all I could to pacify and make him chearful, and getting him up at last, you must not part with me, Mr. Vindex, said I, we must dine and spend the day together. Here is Mr. Clement, my tutor, you and he too must be friends.

I then led him by the hand into a large ground room that Mr. Close, the keeper, had appointed for us; and I ordered dinner to be hastened and brought up. As soon as we were all seated, I began to laugh and joke after my foolish way, in order to make poor Mr. Vindex merry. When I found that it would not do, Mr. Vindex, said I, be so kind to let me know what the money may come to for which you are confined? A terrible sum, indeed, my Darling, said he, no less than
an

an hundred fifty two pounds. I then put my hand in my pocket, and taking out two bills and a little matter of money that made up the sum, I put it into his hand, saying, my friend shall never lie in gaol for such a trifle as this.

Having looked for some time at the bills with amazement, he turned to my tutor with a doubtful and shamed face; is this young Gentleman, Sir, said he, duely authorized to dispose of such vast matters as these? He is, said Mr. Clement, he is the carver and disposer of his father's fortune at pleasure; and I am confident that his father will think himself doubly paid in the use that his noble son has made of his privilege this day.

A gleam then, like that of sunshine, broke through his sad countenance, as through the clouds of a dark day; and, are you the one, he cried, are you the one, Master Harry, whom I treated so barbarously? You may forgive me, my little cherubim, you, indeed, may forgive me, but I never, I never shall forgive myself. O, Mr. Vindex, said I, I would very nearly undergo the same whipping again, to do you twice the kindness, and make you love me twice as much as you now love me.

Dinner

Dinner was now served, and calling for wine, I filled him a bumper, in a large glass, which he drank to the health of my glorious Dada, as he called you, Sir. Upon this we grew very merry and friendly among one another, and, when dinner was over, I begged him to tell me how he came to be put into confinement.

O, Master Harry, he cried, I have suffered all that I have suffered very justly, very justly, for my harsh and cruel usage of you, Master Harry.

After the affair of the hobgoblins, as you know, the shame to which I was put by my fright, and by my scourging, began to be whispered, and then to be noised about the town. The boys, at length, caught the rumour, and began to hoot at me; and the more I chastised them, the more they gathered about me, and shouted after me, a rod for the flogger, a rod for the flogger!

No disease is so deadly, no blasting so baneful, as contempt to a man in the way of his profession. My boys grew disorderly, and behaved themselves in school without respect to my person, or regard to my government. Even my intimates shunned me, and would cast at me a fide glance of smiling scorn as they passed.

My

My school then melted from me like snow in a fog. Even my boarders forsook me. I stood at a high rent; my effects were seized by the landlord. It was in vain that I solicited payment from the parents of my scholars. No one who was indebted to me would give me a penny; while all that I owed came like a tumbling house upon me; and so I was cast into this prison, from whence your bounty has set me free.

My poor broken-hearted wife would have accompanied me to gaol; but, as I had not wherewithal to give her a morsel of bread, I sent her to an old aunt, who had the humanity to take her in.

Alas, alas, poor Mr. Vindex, said I, had I guessed any part of the mischiefs that our unlucky pranks have brought upon you, I would have put both my hands into the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, rather than have borne a part in such a wickedness. For herein we acted the fable of the frogs and the boys, that which was *play* to us, was *death* to you, Mr. Vindex.

In conscience, now, we are indebted to you for every misfortune we caused you; and, as you are not yet paid for the half of your sufferings, I here give you my hand and word to make up a hundred and fifty pounds more for you; and for
this

258 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

this I will not accept the smallest thanks, as I think it is no more than an act of common honesty. And I, cried Mr. Fenton, I hold myself indebted to you a thousand pounds, my noble Harry, for that single sentiment. That is well, that is well, Dada, cried Harry, leaping up and clapping his hands, I shall now be clear in the world with all my poor creditors.

Thus, Dada, continued he, it rejoiced my heart greatly to send poor Mr. Vindex away in such triumph; while my tutor and I went two or three doors off, to see a mighty pretty young creature who was said to be confined with her ancient father. And I will tell you their story, with two or three other stories, more on account of the incidents that happened while we were there, than of any thing else that was wonderful or uncommon in them.

On tapping at the door we were desired to walk in, and saw a female, with her back to us, weaving bone lace on a cushion; while an elderly man, with spectacles on, read to her in Thomas à Kempis. They both rose to salute us. Mr. Clement then stepped up, and seeing what they were about, cried, God cannot but prosper your work, good people, since you employ your time to his purposes, both

both on earth and in heaven. As an earnest of his kindness to you, he sends you, by us, a considerable charity, which you shall receive as soon as you inform us who, and what you are, and how you came here? Blessed be the messengers of my God, cried out the father, whether they come with happy or with heavy tidings, I say with old Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.*

O, Dada! I was quite charmed when the daughter turned to me. There was such a sweetness, such a heavenly harmlessness in her face, that I could have kissed her, and kissed her again and again.

As I had brought a glass and the remainder of our bottle with me, we all got about a board that was half stool and half table, and after a round or two, the good man began his story.

My father's name was Samuel Stern. He had a clear estate of nine hundred and fifty pounds a year, in Suffex, and had, by my mother, three daughters and four sons, of whom I was the second.

My father, unhappily, was a loyalist, and when the troubles broke out between King Charles and the parliament, he took up all the money he could, at any interest, and raised a company at his own cost, which

which he headed on the part of his royal master.

After some successful skirmishes, his head was split by the broad-sword of a trooper, at the battle of Nailby. Immediately all our servants forsook us, each carrying away with them whatever came to hand; and, quickly after, the soldiers of the commonwealth came, drove off all the cattle, and left nothing of our house except the bare walls.

In the mean time we, poor children, huddled together into the garden, and, there separating, ran and crept under bushes and hedges, as so many chickens endeavouring to gain shelter from the kite.

As soon as the noise of the tumult was over, we arose, and looked about fearfully, and, getting together again, we helped one another through the garden-hedge, and made, as fast as we could, to the cottage of a neighbouring farmer, who had been our father's tenant. Here we were received coldly, and fared but very hardly for that night. On the next day however, in order to get quit of us, as I suppose, the man went among our relations, and prevailed on one to take a son, and on another to take a daughter, till we were all divided among them; and so we entered

entered on a kind of service to our kindred, a service, as I believe, that is found, on experience, to be much harder, and more insulting, than any service to a stranger.

I forgot to tell you, Gentlemen, that our mother died before our father engaged in arms, insomuch, that we became orphans in all respects. I fell to the share of an uncle by my mother's side. He had a small estate of about a hundred and twenty pounds yearly income, with one son, and a daughter, whom I thought very lovely.

My uncle appointed me overseer of his labourers, as also his occasional clerk, for casting accounts, and inditing his letters, &c. but when it was intimated to him that there was a secret liking between his daughter and me, he called me aside, and taking up a book of profane poems, he kissed it, and swore by the contents thereof, that, if ever I married his daughter, he would not give us a groat.

If you ever knew what love was, said he to Mr. Clement, you must know that it breaks over stronger fences than these. In short, we were wedded, and turned out of the house without any thing to live upon, except about the value of twenty pounds in small matters, which had been
given

given to my wife, from time to time, by Lady Goodly, her god-mother.

We made the best of our way to London. My wife understood needlework, and as I knew that my father-in-law was quite irreconcilable, I joined myself to a house painter, to whom I gave my time for nothing, on condition of his giving me an insight into his business.

In the third year my dear wife brought this poor creature into the world; but, happily she did not encumber mankind with any more of our wretched and depending progeny.

All our care and delight was fixed on this our little daughter, and we thought nothing of any pains or labours that might serve to introduce her, like herself, into the world.

As soon as Charles II. had ascended the throne, our relations were fully assured that we should be restored to our ancient rights and possessions; and they contributed as it were, for their own credit, to set us forth in a suitable manner for appearing at court. There accordingly we attended, from time to time, for the space of twelve months, and got a number of woeful memorials presented to his Majesty; but his Majesty was so deeply engaged in his pleasures, or so fearful of offending the

enemies of his house, that he gave no attention to our wrongs. There may also be something in the breasts of the great that excites them to acts of bounty rather than acts of justice; for these, as they apprehend, might be accepted as matter of debt and not as matter of favour.

Being tired of a fruitless suit I returned to my former employment, and, by industry and frugality, I lived with my little family quite happy and contented.

About ten months ago two men came to our lodgings. The one was in a rich livery, and having enquired for my daughter, presented her with a note to this effect,—“Lady Diana Templar sends Diana Stern the enclosed bill of twenty-five pounds, in order to put her into some little way of livelihood.”—As my poor dear child had no cause to suspect any fraud or evil intention in the case, she desired the men to return her most humble thanks and duty to her Ladyship, and away they went.

As this lady was a distant relation of my wife's father, my daughter, in a few days, dressed herself in her best cloaths, and went to return thanks to her ladyship in person, but was told that she was gone to her seat in the country.

It

In the mean time she laid out her supposed bounty in furnishing a little shop with some millinery wares, and was already beginning to get some custom, when one evening two bailiffs entered, arrested her, and, taking her up in their arms, hurried her into a coach that drove up to the door.

My wife and I had rushed out on hearing our child shriek, and seeing a coach set off with her at a great rate, we ran after as fast as we could, shouting and screaming and crying, stop the coach, stop the coach, a rape, a rape ! At length a bold fellow, who was passing caught one of the horses by the bridle, and, while the coachmen lashed at him, he took out his knife and cut the reins in two. A mob then began to gather, whereupon a well dressed man, who was in the coach, leaped out and made his escape ; but the coachman was not so lucky, the people pulled him from the box, and having beaten and kicked him, they dragged him through the kennel.

Mean while we got our child out, and then the mob overturned the coach, and, jumping upon it, broke and dashed it all to pieces. We then thought that we had nothing further to apprehend, and, taking our child between us, we turned
back

back and walked homeward ; but, alas ! we were not permitted to enter ; the two bailiffs met us, and, producing their writ, again arrested our daughter at the suit, as they said, of Jonathan Delvil, Esq; for the sum of twenty-five pounds, which he had lent her on such a day. So they conducted her here, while my wife and I accompanied her, weeping and sobbing all the way.

I then took these poor apartments to cover us from the weather, and as my wife grew suddenly sick and faint, I hastened back to our lodgings, and had our bedding brought hither.

It was now evident that the pretended gift of Lady Templar was no other than a diabolical scheme of the villain Delvil, to get the person of my darling within his fangs ; and I cursed my own stupidity for not perceiving it at first ; but blessed be my God, however, in all events, that my lamb was still innocent, was still unfulfilled.

What with grief and the fright together, my dear wife took to her bed, from whence she never rose, but expired on the fifth day, blessing and pressing her daughter to her bosom. My poor infant then fell as dead beside her mother, and could not to be recovered from her fit in many

hours; and, indeed, it was then the wish and the prayer of my soul, that we might all be laid and forgotten in one grave together.

As soon as my darling was recovered, however, I again wished to live for her sake, that I might not leave her without a comforter or protector, in the midst of a merciless and wicked world.

In order to pay the nurse, the doctor, and apothecary, as also to defray the funeral expences, I left my child with the nurse, and, going to my former lodgings, I sold all her millinery wares under prime cost; and having discharged the lodgings and paid my gaol debts, I prepared to lay my precious deposit in the womb of that earth, which is one day to render her back incorruptible to eternity.

When the corpse was carrying out at the door my child fell once more into fits, and I was divided and quite distracted about what I should do, whether to stay with the living, or pay my duty to the dead. But I will no longer detain you with melancholy matters, since all worldly griefs, with all worldly joys also, must shortly be done away.

As soon as I understood that Lady Templar was returned to town, I waited upon her, and giving her an abridgment
of

of our manifold misfortunes, I produced the note that had been written in her name; but she coldly replied, that it was not her hand, and that she was not answerable for the frauds or villainies of others.

Mean while my dear girl accused herself as the cause of all our calamities, and pined away on that account, as pale as the sheets she lay in. She was also so enfeebled by her faintish and sick fits, that she was not able to make a third of her usual earnings; and as I, on my part, was also disqualified from labouring in my profession, since I did not dare to leave my child alone and unsheltered, we were reduced to a state of the greatest extremity.

One day word was brought me that a Gentleman, a few doors off, desired to speak with me; and as they who are sinking, catch at any thing for their support, my heart fluttered in the hope of some happy reverse. Accordingly I followed the messenger. His appearance, in dress and person, was altogether that of Gentleman.

He ordered all others out of the room, and requesting me to sit beside him, in a half whispering voice he began: I am come, Mr. Stern, from one whom you

268 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

have great reason to account your greatest enemy, I come from Mr. Delvil, at whose suit your daughter now lies in prison. I started — Be patient, Sir, he said. He knows your distresses, he knows all your wants, he knows also that he is the author of them, yet I tell you that he feels them, as if they were his own, and that it was not his enmity but his love that occasioned them.

He depends on his old uncle Dimmock for a vast fortune. He saw your daughter and loved her; he saw her again and loved her to madness. He enquired her family, her character, and found that he had nothing to expect from any licentious proposal. He feared, however, that all must love her as he did, and, to prevent other pirates, he made use of the stratagem, which, contrary to his intentions, has brought you here. He never meant any thing dishonourable by your daughter. Had he carried her clear off, you might all have been happy together at this day; and, if you consent, he will marry her here, in the presence of a few witnesses, who shall be sworn to secrecy till his uncle's death, and he will instantly pay you down three hundred pounds in recompence for your sufferings, and will

will settle one hundred pounds annuity on your child for life.

I must own that, to one in my circumstances, this proposal had something very tempting in it. But who is this Mr. Devil, said I, I know him not, I never saw him? — I am the man, Sir, said he. I would have discharged my action as I came to this place, but I dare not permit your daughter to get out of my custody; for, at the loss of my fortune, at the loss of my life, I am determined that no other man living shall possess her. I then promised him that I would make a faithful narrative to my child of all that had passed, but told him, at the same time, that I would wholly subscribe to her pleasure; and so we parted.

As soon as I represented this matter to my Diana, O no, my Papa, she cried, it is impossible! it never can be! I would do any thing, suffer any thing, but this, for your relief. Would you act the marriage of the lamb and the wolf in the fable? If such have been the consequences of this Gentleman's affection for us, what have we not to expect from the effects of his aversion? I would prefer any kind of death to a life with such a man. And then, my mother, she cried, and burst into tears, my dear mother whom he has mur-

270 THE FOOL OF QUALITY.

dered ! though he were worth half the world, and would marry me publicly in the face of the other half ; it will not be ! it cannot be, indeed, my Papa !

Hereupon I wrote Mr. Delvil almost a literal account of my daughter's answer. It is nearly five weeks since this happened, and we have not heard any thing further from him.

In this time, however, we got acquainted with a family at the next door, whose converse has been a great consolation to us. There is a father and mother, with seven small children, boys and girls ; they are very worthy people, and of noble descent, but how they contrive to live at all I cannot conceive, for they have no visible means of making a penny. Had we not known them, we should have thought ourselves the poorest of all creatures. We must own them more deserving of your charity than we are.

Here poor Mr. Stern ended ; and you cannot think, Dada, how my heart leaped with love toward him, on his recommending others as more deserving than himself. So I resolved at once what to do, and taking two fifty pound notes from my pocket-book, you shall not be under the necessity, Mr. Stern, says I, of marrying your pretty lamb here to the ugly wolf,

wolf, so here is fifty pounds to pay your action and fees, and other small debts.

On taking the note, Dada, he looked at it very earnestly, and when he saw it was a true note, he opened his eyes and his mouth so wide, and stood so stiff, without stirring hand or foot, that he put me in mind of Lot's wife who was turned into a pillar of salt. However, I did not seem to mind him, but, turning to his daughter, and shewing her the other note, Miss Diana, says I, here are fifty pounds for you also, in order to set you up in your little shop again, but you shall not have it without a certain condition; what condition, Master, said she, smiling; the condition, says I, of putting your arms about my neck, and giving me one or two sweet kisses. She then looked earnestly at me, with eyes swimming in pleasure, and starting suddenly to me, and catching me to her bosom, she kissed my lips, and my forehead, and my head, again and again, and then set up as lamentable and loud a cry as if her farther had lain a corpse before her.

Mr. Stern then lifted up his eyes, and dropping on his knees, O my God! he cried, how bountiful art thou to a wretch who is not worthy the least of all thy mercies! hereupon the daughter turned,

and, seeing the posture of her father, she fell on her knees before him, and throwing her arms about him, he folded her in his also, and they wept plentifully upon each other.

How comes it, Dada, that crying should be so catching? However it be, Mr. Clement and I could not contain, and I shall love him the better during life for the tears that he shed on that occasion.

On hearing a smart rapping, Mr. Stern rose and opened the door, where a footman, almost breathless, delivered him a letter. The letter was to this purpose, that Mr. Delvil was ill of a quinsy, that he had but a few hours to live, and requested Mr. Stern to bring his daughter to him, that, by marriage, he might give her a lawful title to his fortune. No, Papa, cried Diana, living or dead nothing shall ever bribe me to give my hand to a man who has been the cause of the death of my dearest mother.

Mr. Clement, however, thought it advisable that Mr. Stern should attend the messenger to see if Mr. Delvil was really ill, or whether this might not be some new contrived treachery.

This was a day of successes to poor Mr. Stern. We had promised to stay with his Diana till his return; and he had

not

not been long gone till some one tapped at the door. I opened it and saw an exceeding old and reverend man; he was dressed all in black, and his white head looked like snow on the feathers of the raven. Is Tom Stern here? said he. No, Sir, said I, he is gone into town. I thought he was a prisoner; no, Sir, it is not he, but his daughter, who is under confinement. Will you give a feeble old man leave to sit with you, Gentlemen? and so down he sat. Come here to me, child, says he to Diana, are you a daughter of Tom Stern? I am, Sir, so please you. And what was your mother's name? Anne Roche, Sir; but alas! she is not living, I was the cause of her death; she broke her heart, good Sir, on my being put to gaol. I hope, child, said the old Gentleman, that you were not imprisoned for any thing that was naughty. No, Sir, no, cried Mr. Clement, it was her honesty alone that brought and kept her here; had she been less virtuous, she might have been at liberty and flaunting about in her coach.

The old man then put on his spectacles, and ordering her to draw nearer, he took a hand in each of his, and looking intently in her face, what is your name, my dear? said he; Diana, honoured Sir.

That is a pretty and chaste name, for an unchristian name. Indeed, Diana, you are a sweet babe, and the prettiest little prisoner that ever I saw. I will pay all your debts, and give you a thousand pounds over, if you will come along with me, and be my prisoner, Diana. Ah, Sir, cried the girl, it is too much to have broken the heart of one parent already ; I would not leave my dear father for any man with all the money in all the world. You do not leave your father, he cried, by going with me, Diana. I am your true father, the father of Nanny Roche, the father of her who bore you, your own grandfather, my Diana.

Here she sunk on her knees, between his knees, begging and beseeching his blessing ; while his hands and eyes were lifted in prayer over her. He then raised her, and placing her gently on his knee, clasped her in his aged arms ; while she threw her's about his neck, and joining her cheek to his, sobbed aloud and poured her tears into his bosom. The old gentleman, however, did not express his concern by word, or sob, or even any change of his countenance, and yet his tears fell fast down his reverend and delighted features, upon his grandchild.

This,

This, Dada, was a very pleasing, though a very affecting sight. As soon as the height of their passion was something abated, Miss Diana turned her eye toward me, and said, you were pleased, my grand-papa, to promise that you would pay my debts; but that is done already. This angel here was sent to prevent all others, and he further presented me with this bill of fifty pounds to set me up in a better shop than I kept before.

I rejoice, cried the old man, I rejoice to find that so much of heaven is still left upon earth. But you, my Diana, are now in a condition rather to give charity than receive it from any. Your dear uncle Jeremy, who traded to the West Indies, lately died of the small-pox on his passage homeward. You are the heir of his fortunes, and the heir of my fortune; you are the whole and sole Lady of all our possessions. But, tell me, how much did this young gentleman advance in your favour? A hundred pounds, Sir.

He then took out a Bank note of a hundred pounds, and having offered it to me, I did not dare to refuse it, for fear of offending the honour of the respectable old gentleman; so I held it in my hand after a doubting manner. My dear Miss Diana, says I, I will not be
put

put to the pain of taking this back again, but on the condition of your telling me to whom I shall give it? O, she cried out instantly, to the babies, to the sweet babies at the next door; I wish to heaven I had as much more to add to it for their sakes.

I then enquired the name of her favourite family at the next door, and being told that it was Ruth, I looked over my list, and found that Mr. Ruth was in for above seven hundred pounds. This grieved me very much, as such a sum nearly amounted to the half of our whole stock. However, I comforted myself with the hope that God would send some one else to make up to this poor family what should be wanting on my part.

Mr. Stern just then returned. I beg pardon, said he, Gentlemen, for detaining you so long, but I could not avoid it. The unhappy man is actually dying, a very terrible death, indeed, in his full strength, and almost in his full health, stifling and gasping for air, which the swelling of his glands will not suffer to pass.

As soon as I entered he beckoned to me, and put this paper, sealed, into my hand. And again, observing that I was agitated and deeply concerned for the
state

state under which he laboured, he reached out his hand to me, and grasping my right hand, put this ring upon my finger. — This paper contains, under his hand and seal, a discharge of the action which he laid upon my daughter, as also a conveyance to us of the cash notes enclosed, amounting to three hundred pounds, in consideration, as he recites, of our losses and unjust sufferings. And so, my dear Master Fenton, I here return you your hundred pounds with all possible acknowledgments, and a sense of the obligation that will never leave me during life.

Sir, said I, you must excuse me, I am already paid. That Gentleman, yonder, compelled me to accept of the very sum you offer.

Mr. Stern then started, and, turning, he saw his uncle ; and eying him inquisitively, at length recollected who he was. He then stepped up, and falling on his knees before him, O, Sir, he cried, your pardon, your pardon ! It is all I presume to ask, I dare not hope for your blessing.

Tom, said the old Gentleman, I wanted to be even with you ; I wanted to seduce your daughter, as you seduced mine. But your daughter, Tom, though come of very rebellious parents would not be
seduced.

seduced. Howsomever, as I have taken a liking to her, she must come along with me whether she will or no. And, as Jacob said to Joseph concerning Ephraim and Manasseh, she shall be mine and not thine, Tom; and my name and the name of my fathers shall be named upon her, according to her inheritance. But if you have any affection for this my child, Tom, and are unwilling to part with her, you may follow her and welcome.

Soon after we got up, and, having congratulated this happy family on the blessing of their meeting and reconciliation, I stepped to the old Gentleman, and, catching him about the neck, tenderly took my leave of him, as I did also of Mr. Stern. But when I went to take leave of the fair Diana, she drew some steps backward, and her eyes and sweet features beginning to swell, she again run forward, and, catching me in her dear arms, O my darling! my darling! my darling, she cried, am I then going to lose you, it may be, never to see you more! were it but once in a week, in a month, in a year to behold you, even that would keep me alive. O my best, my most generous, my first preserver, it is you who might be the seducer, who might make me and others to run after you bare-foot. But if

we

we must part, my little angel, do but promise to know me in heaven, and there your poor Diana will meet you, never to part any more.

What could I say or do, Dada, in answer to the dear girl? my heart swelled, almost to bursting, while she caressed and wept over me. At length, with words, as well as my tears would give me leave to pronounce them, I demanded the name of the place to which she was going, and promised to pay her a visit as soon as possibly I could. We then parted very melancholy, notwithstanding all our success; and, going out, I wiped my eyes, and begged Mr. Clement to order tea and coffee, with a comfortable entertainment for the family, at the next door, while I should go in and introduce myself as well as I could.

Having tapped gently at the door, it was opened by a little ragged boy of about five years old. Mrs. Ruth sat full in my view, and her three little daughters stood before her, while she examined them in the Old Testament questions of who was the first man, and the wisest man, and the strongest man, and the oldest man, and, above all, the man after God's own heart?

Mrs. Ruth was a fine woman, and had a great deal of humbled dignity about her.

I bowed

I bowed to her as I entered, and going familiarly up, I took her by the hand and kissed it. Allow me, Madam, said I, to introduce a little neighbour to you; I lodge within a few doors, and shall think myself happy in being acquainted in your family. Alas, my dear, says she, there are very few who seek acquaintance with calamity. They who wish to relieve it seek acquaintance with it, Madam.

Having eyed me all over with an earnest kind of surprize, you look, my love, said she, to be very good-natured, and I dare say will be very charitable when you come to have the ability. The little ability I have, Madam, shall be strained for your service. In the mean time, pray pardon the freedom I have taken in ordering tea and coffee into your room, with some cakes and sweetmeats for these pretty Misses. I will only trouble you, Madam, with one guest more, it is Mr. Clement, my tutor, who, good man, has been no stranger to poverty or distress.

Here she called Mr. Ruth from an inner room, give me leave, my dear, says she, to introduce a young stranger to you; from what world he comes I know not, but I am sure that he is not wholly of the world that we have lived in.

Mr.

Mr. Ruth's countenance spoke at once the meekness of Moses and the patience of Job. Having saluted, we both sat down. Mr. Ruth, said I, I have a message to you and your Lady from your sweet pretty neighbour, Miss Diana Stern. In token of her respect and affection for you, she presents you with this cash note of a hundred pounds. Diana Stern! cried out, Mr. Ruth, why, Master, she is nearly as poor as ourselves. By no means, Sir, I assure you; her grandfather is come to town, she is worth several thousands, besides a considerable estate to which she is heiress. O, the dear angel! cried Mrs. Ruth, I will instantly go and pay her my acknowledgments; so up she got, and out she run, before I could prevent her.

As soon as she was gone, Mr. Ruth, says I, my Dada is much fonder of me than I deserve. He has given me a little money to dispose of at pleasure among the confined debtors, and though I may not have enough to answer your occasions, yet my Dada is so very good and so very generous, that if you give me the sum of your debts, with the story of your distresses, his heart, I am sure, will melt, and he will set you clear in the world.

He made no answer, however, to this my offer, but, lifting up his eyes, he
cried

cried, well mightest thou say, great Saviour of the simple, *suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.* O, thou babe of the manger, *thou first born of many brethren*, here, indeed, is a dear and true little brother of thine, but he speaks in his simplicity, and not according to knowledge. Then, turning toward me, can you guess, my darling, said he, what you undertake to do for me? I question if the charities of all this nation would be sufficient, when united, to effect my deliverance. Nothing, nothing but the arm of the Almighty can do it. He will do it, indeed, in death; but what then shall become of my wife, and seven infants, that truly is terrible, is worse than death to think of.

While we were speaking two sweet little fellows came in, the eldest very nearly of my size, but both clad in very thin and poor-looking apparel. Having kneeled for their father's blessing, they slipped behind us, and, turning my head to observe them, I was quite ashamed, and drew it back again, on perceiving that the poor things were unlading their pockets of old crusts and broken meats, which I supposed they had begged for the family.

Mrs.

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 283

Mrs. Ruth just then returned, and her countenance looked something dejected. She took her seat by her husband, and, continuing a while silent, she put her handkerchief before her eyes, and began in broken words, Can you guess, my dear, said she, what sort of a creature this is whom we have got among us? This little heavenly impostor, to lighten our obligation, would have persuaded us that the hundred pounds was the gift of another, but it is all his own bounty, it is all his own graciousness. Come, my daughters, come, my children, kneel down and return your thanks to this your patron, your benefactor, your little father here?

O Dada, you would have pitied me sadly had you seen me at that time. The poor dear things came, all in a cluster, pressing, and catching, and clasping, and clinging about me; while my love, and my very heart were torn, as it were, to fitters among them. So I took them, one by one, in my arms, and kissed and embraced them very cordially, calling them my brothers and sisters. I then took out another hundred pound note, and, giving it to the eldest of the daughters, here, my dear, said I, I always loved the little Misses better than the little Masters; here is for yourself and your sisters

to

to clothe you in a way more becoming your family. And then taking a note of equal value I gave it to the eldest son, for himself and his brothers, as I said, to help to educate them in a manner more agreeable to the house from whence they came.

Mr. and Mrs. Ruth looked so astonished at me, and at each other, that for a while they were not able to utter a syllable. And just as they began to make their acknowledgments, I cried, hush! hush! here comes my tutor.

Mr. Clement just then entered, followed by people bringing tea, cold fowls, and a bottle of wine.

Having introduced Mr. Clement, we all got round the table, and, when we had finished our little repast, I besought Mr. Ruth to give us the story of his misfortunes.

My father, said he, was Baron of Frankford. He left my brother, with the title, four thousand five hundred pounds a year, entailed, however, upon me in case of his dying without male issue. And he left me a small inheritance of four hundred pounds yearly, to support, in some measure, the appearance of a Gentleman.

As

THE FOOL OF QUALITY. 285

As my concern bordered on my brother's estate, we saw one another every day, and continued for several years in tender amity.

Being both invited one day to dine, with other company, at the house of a neighbour, called Mr. Heartless, a question happened to be started over the bottle, whether the method of setting an egg on end was originally the invention of Columbus, or whether it was communicated to him by some other ; and I unhappily espoused the opinion that was opposite to that of my brother.

Now, though the question was not worth the very shell of the egg about which we debated, yet we entered as warmly into it as though a province had lain at stake ; for it is not truth or instruction that disputants seek after, it is victory alone that is the object of their contention.

After some warm words and personal retorts had passed between my brother and me, he started into sudden passion, and gave me the lye ; whereupon, reaching across the table, I gave him a tap on the cheek with the flat of my fingers : Then, rising furiously from his seat, he swore a fearful oath, and cried, I will ruin you, Harry, though it cost me my estate,
I will

I will ruin you, Harry Ruth, with all who are yours.

The very next day he mustered his tenants and labourers, and coming upon me with a little army, he laid most of my fences level with the earth.

When I complained of this violence to my next neighbours, Mr. Heartless, and Mr. Hollow, they protested they would stand by me against such outrageous proceedings to the last of their fortunes. They then advanced me, between them, five hundred pounds for the purpose. I immediately commenced a suit against my Lord's tenants. But, though I cast them all with costs, I unhappily found that nearly all my money was sunk in the contest.

Mean time scarce a day passed wherein I was not served with a subpoena from Chancery to answer such or such a bill, to which my brother had procured me to be made a party. And he also commenced a suit against me himself, in order to invalidate my father's will, whereby I claimed my little patrimony.

When I told this to my friend Mr. Hollow, he broke into a loud laugh. Your title? cried he; the world cannot invalidate your title, Mr. Ruth; I will let you have a thousand pounds upon it

I

to-morrow;

to-morrow ; and this I was under the necessity of accepting soon after.

Contention serves, with mutual hands, to shut every door against reconciliation. The more I had loved my brother, the more I now detested him. Instead of any submission or overture to appease him, my lips uttered, in daily invectives, the overflowings of my heart ; as I also was assured that, on his part, he wished me nothing less than eternal perdition. Thus we burned on both sides with unquenchable fire, and the kingdom of Satan was fully opened within us.

At length my body was imprisoned, at the suit of my neighbour Heartless, for seven hundred and fifty pounds, and my lands were taken under execution, at the suit of my neighbour Hollow, for the sum of two thousand pounds. But I soon was informed that all this money was my brother's, who had advanced it, from time to time, to those his clandestine correspondents, in order to hasten and deepen my destruction. When I understood this, I raged, I was all on fire ; and I took a horrid pleasure in the notion of having the fangs of a tyger, that I might tear my brother piecemeal, and my false friends, limb from limb, and feast my spirit on their pangs, and mine eyes on their carnage.

But

But when I turned a look on my wife and seven infants, grief joined with rage to tear me by a double distraction. I cursed the lot to which I was appointed upon earth; and I should have sought some desperate means of putting an end to my torments and existence together, but that I dreaded, by my death, to give pleasure to my brother, ten times more than I dreaded the pain of death itself.

O, my friends, had all that ever were fainted come and preached to me the peace of our Lord Christ, at that season, it would have been no more than beating the air, or striving with so many sponges to make an impression on a block of marble. It is distress alone that, by oppression, makes impression; that preaches the internal doctrine of sensible mortification, and humbles a proud spirit, by plucking away all its props.

At first I was as a worm under the foot of my God. I turned, and struggled, and writhed, and fought with all my force against the crusher. But, alas! all was in vain; he was too mighty for me; and opposition served only to add to my anguish.

At length I was compelled to acquiesce, rather through the want of power than the want of will to resist. And I lay, as

it were, without motion under his dispensations, at the same time that my heart reproached him in secret.

Having sold all our moveables, and even our wearing apparel, for sustenance, we were reduced to the necessity of sending our eldest boys to beg fragments of victuals at kitchen windows, to keep us from utterly famishing. This I held to be such a further shame and disgrace as stung my soul to the quick; I therefore began to kick against these pricks also; but finding that the more I spurned, the stronger I was held and pressed into the dust, I gave up all resistance, and contented myself with grieving and weeping under the hand of the Almighty.

From hence I gradually sunk into a state of resigned serenity, which, although without sunshine, was yet without disturbance. My fury smoothed its crest, my passions subsided, and I felt nothing more of rancour against my brother, or resistance against my God.

The activity of the soul will find itself employment. As I had now no further prospect or concern upon earth, I began to turn my thoughts and attention toward heaven. I locked myself into yon-

der closet. I threw myself into the dust. I have sinned, I cried, I have greatly sinned, O God! I am nothing, I am crushed even lower than the nothing that I am; spare, spare me from a deeper perdition, I beseech thee!

I felt that my prayer was heard; peace descended upon me like dew upon the night. The day-star began gradually to dawn to my soul. The dark kingdom of Satan gave way before the kingdom of the Son of Light and Love; and I would no more have entertained any one of my former passions, than I would have taken burning coals and have buttoned them up in my bosom.

I was greatly delighted, Dada, with this part and some more of Mr. Ruth's story, and I got him to repeat it over and over, that I might remember it the better.

I now, continued he, I now pitied my brother as much as ever I had hated him. I grieved for having caused the loss of his peace. I wished to restore it to him. I wrote a penitential acknowledgment of my faults. I besought his pardon, in the humblest manner for the unfortunate blow. I subscribed to the justice of my consequent sufferings; and I sent my son, here, to attend his Lordship with my lowly address.

The

The triumph which this humiliation gave to my brother, supplied him with patience to go through my memorial. But then conceiving, as I suppose, that it was dictated by mercenary meanness and hypocrisy, he tore it to pieces and dashed it into the fire. Then, returning to my child the box which had so enflamed the soul of his Lordship, he kicked my poor little fellow out of his house.

My child came home to me weeping sadly ; but I consoled him the best I could, and mingled my tears with his ; not in any relentment for the treatment received, but through grief for the inveteracy of my unhappy brother. O my God ! I cried, I no longer repine at my abasement, at the weight of my sufferings and mortifications ; I bless thee for them, O God ! they have proved my best friends, my most salutary physicians. Cruel and stern, indeed, is the porter who stands at the iron gate of pain ; but Oh ! it opens upon regions of inward delight ; for he who clothed himself with the cross is all, glorious within.

My happy experience of this truth opened for me a new prospect into the mystery of God's dispensation to mortals ; and threw a number of shining lights on those very articles of gospel-redemption,

which had formerly appeared to me so exceptionable and gloomy. If God, said I to myself, hath suffered man to fall, he hath also provided for him every possible means of recovery and restoration.

Wherefore, when sin came into the world, God also sent suffering, it's inseparable attendant, to be a cure and an antidote to the poison thereof. If sin, therefore, hath thrust the kingdom of heaven from within us, suffering comes as God's forerunner; it relaxes and unfolds the brazen gates of our polluted temple, that Christ, our righteousness, may enter, the very hem of whose garment is salvation to every soul that lays holds upon it.

Here I took Mr. Ruth about the neck, and, kissing him, said, that I was sure my Dada would be willing to pay his whole debt, in return for the sweet instructions which he had given to his Harry. You speak of your Dada, my dear, said he, as though he were the representative of God in the gospel, who forgave to his servant ten thousand talents. What you have given me already, Master, is beyond any human bounty that ever I heard of. I shall therefore lay by two of these notes, till I am better informed how far your good father may be satisfied with the donation.

Soon

Soon after we took leave, for the present, of this honourable family. We then went among the other principal debtors, whose distresses, indeed, were great, though their stories, except one, had little singular in them. In order to make our money go as far as we could, we hurried here and there, through the town, compounding with the several creditors, so that, for about six hundred pounds, we discharged a number who were indebted to the amount of a thousand.

On Tuesday about noon, in the last week, I stepped to Mr. Ruth's, to see if the family had been decently clad, agreeable to my request. There I found him and his four sons clothed in warm and clean, though very coarse, apparel; and he told me that his wife had gone abroad with her three daughters, in order to put them also into a suitable condition.

While I sat with him a young woman came in, of a very genteel appearance, though in a plain dress. Do not you remember the girl, Sir, said she, to Mr. Ruth, who used to come to you over night in a green bonnet and a little red mantle. I should be very ungrateful, indeed, said he, if any change of dress could conceal from my remembrance that sweet and charitable countenance. O, Sir, she cried, the few shillings that I brought

you, from time to time, came from a very affectionate hand, though from a hand you would little suspect of any affection toward you; they came from your loving niece Belinda Ruth, who has shed many a shower of tears on your misfortunes. May heaven be her portion, cried out the good man, since earth has nothing equal to so much goodness. Indeed, Sir, continued the girl, the little that your niece sent you was procured with much difficulty and danger to herself; for, from the time that, on her knees, and with a deluge of tears, she petitioned her father, in your behalf, he kept a watchful eye over her, and took from her all family trusts, so that she had nothing wherewith to supply you, except the price of some cast gowns, and of other little matters that she feigned to have lost. Moreover, my Lord swore vehemently, that if ever she furnished you with the value of a farthing, or kept any kind of correspondence with you or with yours, he would disown and turn her into the public streets.

You alarm me greatly, cried out Mr. Ruth. Is any thing amiss, has any thing happened to my dear child? She was a lovely little lamb, a little angel from her cradle,

cradle; though I should not know her now, if she stood before me. I hope, I say—tell me—proceed, I beseech you!

There was a servant, Sir, a man whom your niece thought very faithful, and therefore entrusted with the secret of my coming to you, that he might attend and see me safe back again. This fellow, presuming on the confidence that was placed in him, would this morning, have taken indecent liberties with his young mistress. This she resented in a becoming manner, and threatened to complain of his insolence to her father. The revengeful villain instantly ran and told the affair to his Lord with many aggravations, as though his daughter was robbing him of all his substance. Thereupon she was hastily called, and, having in part confessed the charge, my Lord, drew his sword in his fury, whereupon giving a shriek and a sudden spring, she got out of his presence, and has sent me to know, Sir, if you will be pleased to receive her?

Yes, cried Mr. Ruth to my bosom, to my heart; with the same pleasure and welcome that a convict receives pardon on the hour of execution.

Just then Mrs. Ruth entered, with her three daughters, who running up to their father,

father, dropped together on their knees before him for a blessing.

While his hands and eyes were raised in prayer over them, the young stranger stepped earnestly up, and, falling on her knees beside the daughters, she broke into tears, and cried aloud, bless me, bless me also, O my father! I am your niece, your Belinda, my father is no more! Your's, my Lord, is the title, your's all the possession; I now, in my turn, depend on your bounty for a morsel of bread. My Brother, my brother dead! exclaimed Mr. Ruth. He is, my Lord, she replied; he was suffocated by his rising cholera, and expired on the spot.

While the young Lady spoke, Mrs. Ruth looked as quite terrified by the tidings of such a sudden elevation; and clapping her hands together, and, lifting her eyes she cried, it cannot be, it is impossible! Our's the title, our's the fortune! — O my God! — O my husband! — O my children! — with which words she sunk senseless on the floor.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.





